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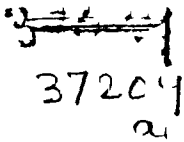
LIGHTS AND SHADES

OF

MILITARY LIFE.



EDITED BY

MAJOR-GENERAL

SIR CHARLES NAPIER, K.C.B

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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ADVERTISEMENT.

It is necessary to apprize the Reader, before he commences the perusal of this work, that the volumes composing it proceed from the pens of two different writers. The first is the production of Count Alfred de Vigny, who is known to his countrymen as the author of the historical novel, "Cinq-Mars," and other works of fiction; and the contents of the second are taken from a publication by M. Elzéar Blaze. The former commenced his military career just after the first dethronement of Napoleon, and, weary of inactive service, has relinquished the sword for the pen. The latter, on finishing his studies at the military academy of Fontainebleau, joined the French army soon after the battle of Eylau, and

was attached to it either in Poland, Germany, or Spain, during all the succeeding campaigns in one or other of those countries, till the conclusion of the general peace.

Without this preliminary explanation, the personal particulars which these officers give concerning themselves could not fail to appear incongruous and contradictory; but, aware of this double authorship, the reader will not be liable to attribute to the one facts and adventures relating to the other.

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PREFACE.

HAVING been requested to undertake the task of editing these volumes, and to furnish such observations on their contents as it appeared to me proper to make, I have endeavoured to comply with this wish by showing how far the work of Count Alfred de Vigny relates to the profession of a British soldier; for he gives us to understand that his object is "to invoke for armies the forgiveness of nations." He seems to apply his invocation to *all* nations, in behalf of *all* armies. On reading this, I felt that, as the British army has committed no crime against the nation, it has no forgiveness to ask; and I thought it useful to make such remarks upon each chapter as should point out to the

young British soldier those parts of the work which, if they apply to continental armies, do not altogether apply to our's. I will take the author's own words. The army, he says, "feels as if it were ashamed of itself, and knows neither what it does, nor what it is; it is incessantly asking itself whether it is the slave or the ruler of the state. This body is every where seeking its soul, but never finds it." The turn of the paragraph is quaint, but, to us British soldiers, quite incomprehensible: we are by no means ashamed of ourselves; we know exactly where we are (generally in colonies and bad climates!); we know precisely what we are; we never ask whether we are the slaves or the rulers of the state, because we know that we are neither; unless a patriotic devotion to our country be called slavery; if so, the British army is composed of slaves—not otherwise. We never seek our soul, because we have it snug in our body; it is called *obedience!*

As the stories in the book are introduced to exemplify the effects of "*military law*," and as

I have written a book upon this subject, the Publisher thinks me in some degree qualified to give my opinion; that the Public will hold the same favourable judgment of me is improbable.

Be this as it may, the portion contributed by Count Alfred de Vigny to these "Lights and Shades of Military Life" is very interesting; but a few notes, however dry they may appear to the ordinary reader, will not be wholly useless to young officers, in proving that our army *has* "a soul," which is a very serious affair, as all sober-minded men will admit, and that we all obey its dictates upon sound patriotic principles, and not blindly. "Blind obedience" is the constant taunt made by a certain class of men against British soldiers; but it is not true. We obey, not from blindness, "not upon compulsion," but upon reflection.

With regard to the translation, I shall not make any other remark than that I am no way answerable for its correctness or language; the praise or blame which that merits belongs to

Mr. Shoberl,* on whom I should be sorry to commit any trespass, especially as I have no doubt that he understands French much better than myself — indeed, as far as I am capable of judging, his translation appears to have great merit.

In stating my reasons for believing in the superiority of the British army, I have attributed its virtues to our constitution. In doing this, I have been led to a comparison between our constitution and that of the United States of America; and thus my *reveries* have run into general politics, for I considered myself at liberty to range as far as my fancy pleased. When a man gets to France, he generally runs on to Italy—that is what I have done: from comparing constitutions, I have touched upon their results; and, in defending *freedom*, I have endeavoured to show that it does not belong to republicanism — a form of government which appears to me to be contrary to nature. God

* Editor of "Forget-me-Not," translator of Thiers' "History of the French Revolution," Victor Hugo's "Notre Dame de Paris," &c. &c.

has created us of different sizes, both morally and physically; he has also ordained that we should walk upon our feet, and under the direction of our heads. Now, a republican form of government seems as if we were all to agree to be cut to an equal length, and that all, who had heads and feet left, should walk upon the one or the other, according as the fashion should be decided by a general vote, passed every four years! Now, this I do not like. I am very fond of my feet: I buy good worsted stockings and good boots for them; I keep them warm and dry with great care; but, I have no idea of their pretending to wear my hat, and making my head do their work. If, in my reveries, I have been stupid and prosy, I am sorry for it; but the reader has the remedy in his hands. Few men read observations and notes, and mine are not necessary to an explanation of Count de Vigny's portion of this work, which contains very interesting stories; so the former may skip over the "*Editor's*" dull notes and lose very little; for the small merit they contain is like a

bad gold mine, and will not, I fear, repay the trouble of working. After this honest confession, I consider that all accounts of conscience between myself and the reader are clear.

C. J. NAPIER.

LIGHTS AND SHADES
OF
MILITARY LIFE.

PART I.
RECOLLECTIONS OF MILITARY SERVITUDE.

CHAPTER I.
MOTIVES FOR PUTTING TOGETHER THESE RECOLLECTIONS.

If it be true that, according to the Catholic poet, there is no keener pain than to call to mind happy times in times of misfortune, it is equally true that the mind feels some pleasure in reverting, in moments of tranquillity and liberty, to periods of pain or of slavery. This melancholy emotion causes me to cast a retrospective glance at some of the years of my life,

though those years are not far from the present, and though that life has not yet been very long.

I cannot abstain from recording what sufferings I have witnessed — sufferings but little known, and endured with fortitude by a race of men, always slighted or honoured beyond measure, according as nations find it to be useless or necessary.

It is not, however, this sentiment alone that instigates me to this undertaking, which, I hope, will occasionally serve to show, by details of manners observed with my own eyes, how much there is yet left that is antiquated and barbarous in the quite modern organization of our permanent armies, in which the soldier is separated from the citizen, in which he is unhappy and ferocious, because he feels his condition to be cruel and absurd. It is lamentable that, while every thing is changing among us, the destiny of armies should alone undergo no modification. The christian religion has once changed the ferocious usages of war; but the consequences of the new manners which it introduced have not been pushed far enough on that point. Before its time, the vanquished were put to death or enslaved for life, the towns

taken were pillaged, and the inhabitants expelled and dispersed; accordingly, every state, filled with alarm, held itself in constant readiness for desperate measures, and the defence was not less ferocious than the attack. At the present day, all that conquered towns have to apprehend is the payment of contributions. Thus war has become civilized, but not armies; for not only has the routine of our customs retained all that was vicious in them, but the ambition or the terrors of governments have increased the evil, by separating them daily more and more from the country, and by subjecting them to a servitude more idle and more gross than ever. I put but little faith in the benefits of sudden organizations; but I can comprehend those of gradual improvements. When general attention is directed to an evil, the cure is speedy. This cure, indeed, is a problem difficult of solution for the legislator, but for that reason so much the more necessary to be proposed. Here, then, I propose it; and, if our epoch is not destined to arrive at its solution, at any rate I shall have given a form to this wish, and its difficulties will perhaps be thereby diminished. It is impossible to hasten too much the period when armies shall be more identified with the Nation,

if it is to arrive at that time when armies and war shall be no more, and when the globe shall comprehend but one nation unanimous at last on its social forms — a consummation which ought long since to have been accomplished.

I have no intention whatever to interest the reader for myself; these recollections will be rather the memoirs of others than my own: but I have been grievously enough and long enough hurt at the strange anomalies of military life to be able to treat of them. It is only to prove my claim to this sad right that I say a few words concerning myself. I belong to that generation born with the century, which, fed with the bulletins by the Emperor, had a naked sword constantly before its eyes, and came forward to grasp it at the very moment when France was sheathing it in the scabbard of the Bourbons. Accordingly, in these modest sketches of an obscure part of my life, I wish to appear nothing more than what, to my deep regret, I was — spectator rather than actor. The events that I sought were not, when they did come, so great as I could have wished. What was to be done! We have it not always in our power to play the part that we prefer; and the dress does not always come to us at the time

when it most befits us. At the moment when I am writing, a man after twenty years' service has not seen a pitched battle. I have but few adventures to relate; but I have heard much. I shall, therefore, let others speak more than myself, unless when I shall be obliged to call myself forward as a witness. To this I have always felt some repugnance, owing to a certain bashfulness that comes over me when I have to appear in person upon the stage. Whenever this shall happen, I can at least attest that in those places I shall adhere to truth. In speaking of one's self, the best Muse is frankness. I could not bedizen myself with a good grace in peacock's plumage; beautiful as it is, I conceive that every one ought to prefer his own to it. I am not modest enough, I must confess, to imagine that I should gain much by borrowing any thing from the attractions of another, and by assuming an imposing attitude, artistically chosen, and painfully retained at the expence of good natural inclinations and of an innate propensity that all of us have to truth. I am not sure that in our times this literary affectation has not been carried to excess, and I cannot help thinking that the pout of Bonaparte and that of Byron have planted grimaces on many an innocent face.

Life is too short for us to waste a precious portion of it in making counterfeits of ourselves. If indeed we had to deal with a people rude and easily duped, the case would be different; but our's has an eye so quick, so sharp, as to discover in a moment from what model you borrow this expression or that gesture, this favourite word or that favourite step, or merely this head-dress or that coat. It blows immediately upon the beard of your mask, and conceives a contempt for your real face, to the natural features of which it might otherwise have taken a liking.

I shall therefore assume little of the warrior, having seen but little of war; but I have a right to speak of the manly customs of the army, in which fatigues and disgusts were not spared me, and which steeped my soul in a patience proof against every thing, by making it concentrate its energies in solitary reflexion and study. I shall have it in my power to show what there is alluring in the savage life of arms, arduous as it is, having remained in it so long, between the echo and the vision of battles. Those fourteen years would most certainly have been thrown away, had I not meanwhile exercised an attentive and persevering observation, which turned every thing to account for the

future. I am even indebted to an army life for views of human nature which I never could have acquired unless under the military habit. There are scenes which are to be met with only amidst disgusts, that would be absolutely intolerable if one were not forced to endure them.

I was always fond of listening, and I contracted this fondness when quite a child on the wounded knees of my old father. He entertained me first with the history of his campaigns, and on his knees I found war seated by my side: he showed me war in his wounds, war in the parchments and the blazonry of his ancestors, war in the large cuirassed portraits hung up in an old mansion in Beauce. I saw in the nobility a great family of hereditary soldiers, and I thought of nothing but raising myself to the height of a soldier.

My father related his long wars with the profound observation of a philosopher and the grace of a courtier. Through him I became intimately acquainted with Louis XV. and the great Frederick; I would not affirm that I had not lived in their time, familiar as I was with them from so many narratives of the Seven Years' war.

He entertained for Frederick II. that en-

lightened admiration which can view extraordinary faculties without being astonished beyond measure by them. He infused into me from the first the spirit of this view, telling me at the same time that too warm enthusiasm for this illustrious enemy had been a fault of the officers of his time; that they were thus half-conquered when Frederick advanced, magnified by French exaltation; that the successive dissensions of the three powers and of the French generals with one another had been of service to him in the brilliant fortune of his arms; but that his greatness chiefly consisted in knowing himself thoroughly, in appreciating the elements of his elevation at their real value, and in doing the honours of his victory with the modesty of a sage. He appeared sometimes to think that Europe had purposely spared him. My father had opportunities of closely observing this royal philosopher on the battle-fields of Clostercamp and Crefeldt,* where his brother, the eldest of my seven uncles, had been killed by a cannon-ball; he had frequently been received by the king under the Prussian tent with a grace and

* This is a small blunder. Frederick was neither at Clostercamp nor Crefeldt. The Brunswick Princes were the heroes of *those* fields.—EDITOR.

a politeness absolutely French, and had heard him talk of Voltaire and play the flute after winning a battle.

I am dilating here, almost in spite of myself, because this was the first great man whose portrait was thus drawn for me *en famille*, from nature, and because my admiration for him was the first symptom of my useless love of arms, the primary cause of one of the most complete deceptions of my life. This portrait is still radiant in my memory with the brightest colours, and the physical portrait not less so than the other. His hat pulled down over a powdered brow, his back arched when riding, his sarcastic and severe mouth, his invalid cane in the form of a crutch—there was nothing but what I was acquainted with; and, after listening to these particulars, I was vexed to see Bonaparte assume the like hat, snuff-box, and gestures: at first he appeared to me a plagiary, and who knows whether, on this point, that great man was not so in some degree? Who can estimate how much of the actor there is in every public man who is always in sight? Was not Frederick II. the prototype of the great modern tactician, of the royal philosopher and organizer?

Such were the first ideas that were awakened in my mind; and I found myself transported to other times, narrated with a truth teeming with sound lessons. I still hear my father quite incensed at the dissensions between the Prince de Soubise and M. de Clermont; I still hear his vehement indignation against the intrigues of the Œil de Bœuf, which caused the French generals to abandon one another on the field of battle, preferring the defeat of the army to the triumph of a rival; I hear him deeply moved by his old friendship for M. de Chevert and for M. d'Assas, with whom he was in camp on the night of his death. The eyes which had beheld them put their image into mine, and also that of many other celebrated persons who had died long before I was born. Family narratives have this advantage, that they sink deeper into the memory than written narratives; they are living like the revered relater, and they extend our life backward, as the imagination that anticipates is capable of extending it forward into the future.

I know not whether I shall some day commit to writing for myself all the minute details of my life: but here I mean to speak only of one of the pre-occupations of my soul. Sometimes,

with a mind tormented by the past, and expecting but little from the future, men yield too easily to the temptation of amusing a few idlers with their family secrets and the mysteries of their hearts. I can conceive how it happens that some writers have taken pleasure in enabling all eyes to penetrate into the interior of their lives and even of their consciences, opening and even suffering them to be surprised by the light, all in disorder, and, as it were, littered with familiar recollections and with darling faults. There are such works among the finest books in our language, and which will be left us like those beautiful portraits of himself that Raphael was incessantly painting. But those who have thus represented themselves, either veiled or with uncovered face, have had a right to do so; and I do not think that one is authorized to make one's confessions aloud, before one is either old enough, illustrious enough, or penitent enough, to interest a whole nation by one's sins. Till then one ought not to pretend to more than to be useful to it by one's ideas or one's actions.

Towards the end of the empire, I was a thoughtless pupil of the Lycée. War was afoot in the Lycée; the drum drowned to my ears

the voice of the masters, and the mysterious voice of books spoke to us but a cold and pedantic language. Logarithms and tropes were in our eyes but steps to mount to the star of the Legion of Honour, for boys the brightest star in the heavens.

No meditation could long engage heads turned incessantly by cannon, and bells, and Te Deums. When one of our comrades, who had quitted college a few months before, made his appearance again in hussar uniform and his arm in a sling, we were ashamed of our books, and flung them at the heads of the masters. The masters themselves never ceased reading to us the bulletins of the grand army, and our shouts of *Vive l'Empereur!* interrupted Tacitus and Plato. Our teachers were like heralds at arms, our rooms for study like barracks, our recreations like manœuvres, and our examinations like reviews.

I was then seized more than ever with a really inordinate fondness for military glory—a passion so much the more unfortunate, as it was precisely the time when, as I have observed, France was beginning to be cured of it. But the storm still raged; and neither my studies, severe, forced, and too precocious, nor the noise of the great world, into which, in order to

divert me from this predilection, I had been thrown when quite a youth, could take from me this fixed idea.

I have very often smiled with pity at myself, on seeing with what force an idea lays hold of us, how it makes a dupe of us, and what a time it takes before it is worn out. Satiety itself served only to make me disobey this, not to destroy it within me, and this very book proved to me that I still take pleasure in fondling it, and that I should be very liable to a relapse—so profound are the impressions of boyhood, and so deeply was the burning mark of the Roman eagle engraven on our hearts!

It was not till very late that I perceived that my services were a long mistake, and that I had carried a wholly contemplative nature into a wholly active life. But I had followed the bent of that generation of the Empire born with the century, and to which I belong.

So clearly did war seem to us to be the natural state of our country, that when, on escaping from the classes, we threw ourselves into the army, following the accustomed course of our torrent, we could not believe in the durability of the quiet of peace. It appeared to us that we risked nothing by making believe to rest ourselves, and that inaction was not a

serious evil in France. This impression lasted so long as the Restoration lasted. Every year brought with it the hope of war; and we durst not relinquish the sword, for fear that the day of our resignation might be the eve of a campaign. In this manner, we dragged on; and wasted precious years, dreaming of fields of battle in the Champ de Mars, and exhausting a powerful and useless energy in parade exercises and private quarrels.

Overwhelmed by a listlessness which I had not expected in a life so ardently desired, it then became a necessity for me to steal away at nights from the wearisome and vain bustle of military days. From those nights, when I increased in silence the stock of knowledge which I had derived from our tumultuous and public studies, sprang my poems and my books; of those days I have left me these reminiscences, the principal traits of which I here collect around one idea. For, depending neither on the present nor the future for the glory of arms, I sought it in the recollections of my companions. The little that has befallen me will serve only as the frame to these pictures of the military life and manners of our armies, all the traits of which are not known.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE GENERAL CHARACTER OF ARMIES.

The Army is a nation in the Nation; it is a vice of our times. In ancient times, the case was different; every citizen was a warrior, and every warrior a citizen; the men of the army did not assume a different aspect from the men of the city. The fear of the gods and of the laws, fidelity to the country, austerity of manners, and, strange as it may seem, the love of peace and order, were more prevalent in the camps than in the towns, because it was the *élite* of the nation that inhabited them. Peace brought with it severer toils than war for these intelligent armies. By them the territory of the country was studded with public buildings, or intersected by high roads; and the Roman cement of the aqueducts was mixed, and Rome herself built, by the hands which defended her. The repose of their soldiers was productive and beneficial, in the same degree that the repose of

our's is sterile and pernicious. The citizens felt neither admiration for their valour nor contempt for their idleness, because the same blood circulated incessantly in the veins of the Nation and in the veins of the Army.

In the middle ages, and, still later, down to the reign of Louis XIV., the Army still belonged to the Nation, if not by all its soldiers, at least by all their officers; because the soldier was the retainer of the noble, raised by him on his own estate, taken along with him to the army, and dependent on him alone: his lord was, of course, a landed proprietor, and lived in the very bowels of the mother-country. Swayed by the wholly popular influence of the priest, he did nothing during the middle ages but devote himself, life and fortune, to the country, often in hostility to the crown, and incessantly revolting against a hierarchy of powers, which would have introduced too much abasement into obedience, and, consequently, too much humiliation into the profession of arms. The regiment belonged to the colonel, the company to the captain; and both were ready enough to take away their men, when their consciences as citizens condemned the orders which they received as soldiers.

This independence of the Army lasted in France till the time of M. de Louvois, who first subjected it to the control of *bureaux*, and delivered it up, bound hand and foot, to the sovereign power. This he accomplished without encountering much resistance, and the last defenders of the generous liberty of the military were those plain, rough gentlemen, who would not lead their family of soldiers to the Army unless to go to war. Though they had not spent the year in teaching automata the everlasting drill exercise, I find that both they and their men behaved extremely well in Turenne's battles. They particularly disliked the uniform, which gives the same look to all, and subjects minds to the dress and not to the man. They were fond of dressing in red on days of battle, that they might be more conspicuous to their own troops, and afford a better mark to the enemy; and I take delight in calling to mind, on the authority of Mirabeau, that old Marquis de Coëtquen, who, rather than appear in uniform at a review by the king, suffered himself to be broke by him at the head of his regiment. "Fortunately, sire," said he afterwards, "the pieces are left me." It was something to make such a reply to Louis XIV.

I am aware of the thousand defects of the organization which then expired; but I assert that it surpassed our's in this, that it allowed the national and martial fire of France to burn and blaze more freely. This sort of Army was a very strong and very complete armour, with which the Country covered the Sovereign Power, but all the pieces of which could drop off of themselves one after another, if that Power attempted to employ them against it.

The destiny of a modern army is totally different from that, and the centralisation of the powers has made it what it is. It is a body separated from the great body of the Nation, and which seems to be the body of an infant, so backward is it in point of intelligence, and so completely is it prevented from growing. The modern army, as soon as it ceases to be at war, becomes a sort of gendarmerie. It feels, as it were, ashamed of itself, and knows neither what it does nor what it is; it is incessantly asking itself whether it is the slave or the ruler of the state; this body is every where seeking its soul, but never finds it.

The paid man, the Soldier, is a glorious pauper, victim and executioner, a scapegoat daily sacrificed to his people and for his people,

which plays with him; he is a martyr at once ferocious and humble, whom Power and the Nation, ever at variance, bandy from one to the other.

How often, when I have been forced to take an obscure but active part in our civil disturbances, have I felt my heart swell with indignation at this inferior and cruel condition! How often have I compared this existence to that of the gladiator! The people is the indifferent Cæsar, the sneering Claudius, to whom the soldiers incessantly cry as they file past: *Those who are going to die salute thee!*

Let but a few workmen, who have become more and more wretched in proportion to the increase of their toil and their industry, raise a riot against their employer, or a manufacturer take a fancy to add this year a few hundred thousand francs to his income; or let merely a *good city*, jealous of Paris, be bent on having also its three days' fighting; and both parties cry out for help. The government, whatever it may be, replies with great good sense: "The law does not permit me to judge between you; all of you are in the right: I can do no more, for my part, than send you my gladiators, who shall slaughter you, and whom you shall

slaughter." Accordingly, away they go; they kill, and they are killed. Peace is restored, the parties embrace and compliment one another, and the hunters of hares boast of their cleverness in picking off soldier and officer. When the account comes to be made up, there are merely a few dead to subtract; but the number of the soldiers is never stated, they are not counted. No one concerns himself about them. It is taken for granted that men who die in the uniform have neither father nor mother, neither wife nor sweetheart, to break their hearts after them. Their's is anonymous blood.

Sometimes — and it is now-a-days too frequently the case — the two parties that have fallen out join to overwhelm with hatred and maledictions the unfortunate wretches who have been condemned to quell them.

Thus, the pervading sentiment of this book will be that which caused me to commence it— the wish to avert from the head of the Soldier that malediction which the citizen is frequently ready to hurl at him, and to invoke for the Army the forgiveness of the Nation. There is nothing more admirable after inspiration than devotedness, after the Poet than the Soldier; it is not his fault if he is doomed to the state of a Helot.

The Army is blind and mute. It strikes before it from the spot on which it is placed. It has no will of its own, and acts by means of springs. It is a mighty machine which is set in motion and which kills; but it is also a thing which suffers.

Hence it is that I have always spoken of it with an involuntary emotion. We are now cast upon severe times, when the cities of France are successively becoming fields of battle, and of late we have had much to forgive the men whose trade it is to kill.

On closely examining the life of those armed troops whom all the Powers that shall succeed one another will be daily urging upon us, we shall find, it is true, that, as I have said, the existence of the soldier is, next to the punishment of death, the most lamentable vestige of barbarism subsisting among men; but also that nothing is more worthy of the interest and the love of the Nation than that sacred family, which sometimes confers on it so much glory.

CHAPTER III.

OF THE SERVITUDE OF THE SOLDIER, AND OF HIS INDIVIDUAL CHARACTER.

The words of our familiar language are many of them admirably expressive of their meaning. To obey and to command an army—what is this but to serve! This Servitude must be deplored, but it is right to admire those slaves. All of them accept their lot, with all its consequences; and, in France especially, men acquire with extreme facility the qualities necessary for the military profession. All that activity which is natural to us subsides at once, and gives place to a certain sedateness and sadness that I cannot describe.

The soldier's life is dull, monotonous, regular. The hours sounded by the drum are as empty and as dreary as itself. The step and look are uniform, like the dress. The vivacity of youth and the sedateness of mature age at length acquire the same gait, and this is that of the

arm ; and whether that *arm* be infantry, cavalry, or artillery, it forms the mould into which each throws his character, where it is changed and melted down, that it may take a general form imparted to it for ever. The man is effaced by the soldier.

Military Servitude is heavy and unbending as the iron mask of the nameless prisoner, and gives to every soldier a cold and uniform face.

Thus, at the mere aspect of a *corps d'armée*, you perceive nothing but listlessness and discontent in the general features of the military visage. Fatigue adds its wrinkles, the sun its sallow tint, and a premature old age furrows faces of thirty. Nevertheless, an idea common to all has frequently imparted to this assemblage of serious men an extraordinary character of majesty, and that idea is *self-denial.* The self-denial of the warrior is a heavier cross than that of the martyr. A man must have borne it long, before he knows its magnitude and its weight.

Self-sacrifice must certainly be the most admirable thing in the world, since it has so much beauty in the simple men who frequently have no notion of their merit, or of the secret of their life. It is this that causes a factitious but generous character, the traits of which are grand

and good like those of the antique medals, to spring from that life of annoyance and disgust.

The complete denial of self to which I am alluding, the continual and indifferent expectation of death, the entire renunciation of the freedom of thinking and acting, the delays imposed upon a limited ambition, and the impossibility of amassing wealth, produce virtues that are more rare in the free and active classes.

In general, the military character is simple, kind, patient, and something boyish is to be found in it, because life in regiments has some resemblance to life in colleges. The traits of roughness and sadness which darken it are imprinted by *ennui*, but chiefly by an ever false position in regard to the Nation, and by the necessary farce of authority.

The absolute authority exercised by one man forces upon him a perpetual reserve. He cannot smooth his brow before his inferiors, without allowing them to take a familiarity which derogates from his power. He cuts himself off from free intercourse and friendly chat, for fear of some confession that might be turned against him, or of some weakness that might set a bad example. I have known officers who have locked up their thoughts in as close silence as Trappists,

and whose grave lips never stirred their moustache but to give passage to a command.

At the time of the Empire, such was almost universally the countenance of the superior officers and of the generals. The example of it had been set by the master, and the custom had been rigidly and reasonably observed; for, to the necessary consideration of repelling familiarity was superadded the need which their old experience had to keep up its dignity in the eyes of youth better educated than itself, pouring forth incessantly from the military schools, and arriving with heads crammed full of figures, and with an assurance imparted by academic honours, which nothing but silence was capable of curbing.

I never liked the class of young officers, even when I belonged to it myself. A secret instinct of truth taught me that, in every circumstance, theory is nothing in comparison with practice, and the grave and silent smile of the old captains put me on my guard against all that paltry science which is acquired by a few days' reading. In the regiments in which I have served, I was fond of listening to those old officers, whose arched back still had the attitude of the back of the soldier, laden with a knapsack full of clothes

and a cartouch-box full of ammunition. They told me old stories of Egypt, of Italy, and of Russia, which taught me more of war than the ordinance of 1789, the regulations of service, and the interminable instructions, commencing with those of the great Frederick to his generals.

I found, on the contrary, something disgusting in that confident, indolent, and ignorant self-sufficiency of the young officers of that period, everlasting smokers and gamesters, attentive only to the smartness of their appointments, skilled in the cut of a coat, orators of the coffee-house and the billiard-room. Their conversation had in it nothing more characteristic than that of all the ordinary young men of the fashionable world; only its licences were rather grosser.

In order to derive some benefit from the society around me, I lost no opportunity of listening, and I rarely missed the hours of regular promenades, when the old officers take a pleasure in the interchange of their recollections. They were not unwilling, on their part, to inscribe in my memory the particular histories of their lives; and, finding in me a patience equal to their own, and a silence equally serious, they always showed a readiness to open themselves to me. We frequently

walked of an evening in the fields or in the woods around the garrisons, or on the sea-shore, and the general aspect of nature, or the slightest accident of ground, furnished them with inexhaustible reminiscences: it was either a sea-fight, or a celebrated retreat, or a fatal ambuscade, or a combat of infantry, or a siege; interspersed with regret for a time of dangers, respect for the memory of some great general, honest praise of some obscure name which they deemed illustrious; and amidst all this a touching simplicity of heart, which filled mine with a sort of veneration for this manly character, forged in continual adversities and in the doubts of a false and vicious position.

I have the gift, frequently a painful one, of a memory which time never impairs; my whole life, with all its days, is present to me like a picture that cannot be effaced. The traits are never confounded with one another; the colours never grow faint. Some are black, and lose none of their intensity, which afflicts me. Some flowers are there too, whose corollas are as fresh as on the day of their blowing, especially when an involuntary tear drops from my eyes upon them, and gives them a brighter tint.

The most unprofitable conversation of my life

is always Present to me at the moment when I call it up; and I should have too much to say, if I meant to relate stories which have no other merit than that of simple truth; but, full of friendly pity for the wretchedness of armies, I shall choose from among my recollections such as appear to me to be a garb sufficiently decorous and of a form worthy to clothe a chosen thought, and to show how many situations adverse to the development of character and intelligence result from the gross servitude of standing armies, and the great distance at which their manners remain behind the spirit of the age.

Their crown is a crown of thorns, and among those thorns I do not think that there is one more painful than that of passive obedience. This shall be the first that I intend to make the reader feel the keenness of. I shall begin with it, because it furnishes me with the first example of the cruel necessities of the army, in following the order of my years. When I go back to my earlier recollections, I find in my military childhood an anecdote which is present to my memory, which I will repeat as it was told to me, without seeking, but without avoiding, in any of my narratives, those minute traits in the military

life and character, which, I cannot too often repeat it, are both behind the general spirit and the march of the Nation, and, consequently, both impressed with a certain stamp of puerility.

CHAPTER IV.

AN ADVENTURE ON THE ROAD.

THE high road to Artois and Flanders is long and dreary. It runs in a straight line, without trees, without ditches, through a level country, covered in all seasons with a yellow mud. In the month of March, 1815, I was travelling along this road, and what I then fell in with I shall never forget.

I was alone, on horseback; I had a good cloak, a black helmet, pistols, and a large sabre. It had poured with rain for the four days and four nights that I had been on the road, and I remember that I was singing *Joconde* at the top of my voice. I was then very young. In 1814, the king's household troops had been filled up with boys and old men: the Empire seemed to have swept off and destroyed all between the two.

My comrades were before me, on the road, escorting King Louis XVIII; I saw their white

cloaks and their scarlet uniforms quite at the horizon to the north; Bonaparte's lancers, who watched and followed our retreat step by step, showed from time to time the tricoloured flag of their lances at the opposite horizon. My horse had lost a shoe, and I had been obliged to stop to get it replaced: he was young and strong; I urged him on to overtake my squadron; and off he went at full trot. I clapped my hand to my belt—it was well lined with gold; I heard the iron sheath of my sabre clank against the stirrup, and I felt extremely proud and perfectly happy.

It continued to rain, and I continued to sing. Presently, however, I gave up, tired of hearing nothing but my own voice, and then I could hear only the rain and the splashing of my horse's feet in the puddles. We came to a part of the road that was not paved: my horse began to sink in it, and I was obliged to take a foot pace. My great boots were covered outside with a thick crust of mud as yellow as ochre, and inside they were full of water. I looked at my bran-new gold epaulettes, my pride and my consolation; they were tarnished by the wet, and that vexed me.

My horse stooped his head; I did the same.

I fell to thinking, and asked myself for the first time whither I was going. About that matter I knew absolutely nothing, but it did not occupy me long; I was certain that my squadron was there, and that there, too, was my duty. As I felt in my heart a profound and unalterable tranquillity, I was grateful for it to that ineffable sentiment of duty, and strove to account for it to myself. Seeing how many unaccustomed hardships were cheerfully borne by heads so flaxen or so white, how the most flattering prospects were so cavalierly risked by so many men fond of indulgence and worldly enjoyments; and, taking my share of that miraculous satisfaction imparted to every man by the conviction that he cannot withdraw himself from any of the debts of honour; I comprehended that SELF-DENIAL is a thing more easy and more common than one would imagine.

I asked myself if this self-denial be not a sentiment that is born with us; what is that influence which forces us to obey and to resign our will to other hands as a heavy and cumbrous burden; whence proceeds the secret happiness that we feel on getting rid of this load; and how it happens that human pride never revolts against all this. I certainly saw this mysterious

instinct binding up, on all sides, families and nations into mighty bundles, but no where did I see the renunciation of one's actions, one's words, one's wishes, and almost one's thoughts, so complete and so terrible as in the army. Every where else I saw resistance possible and customary, the citizen having, in all places, a clear-sighted and intelligent obedience, which examines and knows where to stop. I even saw the tender submission of woman ceasing where evil begins to be enjoined her, and the law taking up her defence; but military obedience, at once passive and active, receiving and executing orders, striking blindfold, like the Fate of the ancients! I followed in its possible consequences this self-denial of the soldier, without limit, without conditions, and leading sometimes to the most painful duties.

My thoughts were thus engaged while letting my horse take his own pace, looking at my watch, and seeing the road still run on in a straight line, without a tree, and without a house, intersecting the plain to the horizon like a long yellow stripe on a grey carpet. Sometimes this yellow stripe became more diluted than the liquid soil that surrounded it; and, when a somewhat less pale light brightened the

face of this dreary tract of country, I found myself amidst a muddy sea, floundering on in a current of slush and slime.

On examining with attention this yellow stripe of the road, I perceived, at the distance of about three quarters of a mile, a small dark speck moving along. I was pleased at this sight; it was somebody, of course. I observed that this black speck was going like myself towards Lille, and that it moved in a zig-zag, which indicated a wearisome march. I quickened my pace, and gained upon the object, which gradually appeared longer and larger. I again put my horse into a trot on a firmer soil, and I thought that I could distinguish a sort of little black vehicle. I was hungry; I hoped that it might be the cart of some suttler, and, considering my poor horse as a boat, I plied the oars with might and main to reach the fortunate island in that sea, in which he sometimes sank up to the saddle-girth.

At the distance of about a hundred paces, I could clearly discern a little cart of white wood, covered with three hoops and a black oil-cloth. It looked like a little cradle placed on two wheels. The wheels sank up to the axle in mud; a little mule that drew it was led with

great toil by a man on foot, who had hold of the bridle. I approached him, and looked at him attentively.

He was a man of about fifty, with moustaches, tall and stout, his back curved after the manner of old infantry officers who have carried the knapsack. He wore the uniform of one, and from beneath a short threadbare blue cloak I got a glimpse of the epaulette of *chef de bataillon*. His features were hard but benevolent, such as you often meet with in the army. He looked at me askance from beneath his bushy black eye-brows, and in a twinkling took out of his cart a musket which he shouldered, passing at the same time to the other side of his mule, of which he made a rampart. Having seen his white cockade, I merely showed the sleeve of my red coat, on which he replaced the musket in the cart, saying:—"Ah! that alters the case; I took you for one of those chaps that are running after us. Will you take a whet?"

"Willingly," said I, approaching him; "it is twenty-four hours since I had any thing to drink."

He had slung round his neck a cocoa-nut shell, formed into a bottle with a silver neck, and which he seemed to be not a little proud of.

He handed it to me; I drank a little thin white wine with great pleasure, and returned the flask.

"To the King's health!" said he, drinking; "he has made me an officer of the Legion of Honour; it is but right that I should follow him to the frontiers. Of course, as I have but my epaulette to live by, I shall rejoin my battalion afterwards—it is my duty."

While thus speaking, as it were to himself, he set his little mule a-going again, observing that we had no time to lose, and, being of his opinion, I too began to move on a couple of paces from him. I kept my eyes upon him, but without asking any questions, having never liked that babbling indiscretion so common among us.

We walked on thus without speaking for half a mile, or rather more. As he then stopped to give a moment's rest to his little mule, which I could not look at without pain, I stopped too, and tried to squeeze out the water that filled my jack-boots, like two reservoirs in which my legs were steeping.

"Your boots begin to stick to your legs," said he.

"It is four nights since I had them off," I replied.

"Pooh! in eight days you would think nothing of it," rejoined he, in his harsh voice: "it is something to be alone, let me tell you, in times such as these that we live in. Do you know what I have in there?"

"No," said I.

"It is a woman."

"Aha!" I responded, without showing too much surprise, and I began to move on quietly at a foot pace. He followed me.

"This trumpery wheelbarrow did not cost much," he resumed, "nor the mule either; but it is as much as I want, though this road is a rather long *tail-ribbon*, I must say."

I gave him the offer of mounting my horse when he should feel tired; and, as I talked to him only seriously and with simplicity about his equipage, which might, he feared, afford a subject for ridicule, he felt at his ease at once, and, coming close to my stirrup, he patted my knee, saying: — "Well, you are a good lad, though you do belong to the Reds."

From the bitter tone in which he thus alluded to the four Red Companies, I perceived how many resentful prepossessions the luxury and the appointments of those corps of officers had excited in the army.

"And yet," he added, "I shall not accept your offer, because I know nothing of riding, and it is no affair of mine."

"But, commandant, the superior officers, like you, are obliged to ride."

"Pshaw! once a year, at the inspection, and then on a hired horse. For my part, I was always first a seaman, then a foot-soldier; I never could ride."

He proceeded about twenty paces, looking aside at me from time to time, as if expecting a question, but, as I uttered not a word, he continued:—"You are not inquisitive, I see. And yet what I have just said must surprize you."

"I have learned not to be much surprized at any thing," said I.

"Oh! but, if I were to tell you what made me quit the navy, we should see."

"Well," I replied, "why don't you try? That will warm you, and it will make me forget that the rain is pouring in at my back, and running down to my very toes."

The good *chef de bataillon*, with boyish pleasure, made due preparations for commencing his story. He re-adjusted his cap covered with oil-skin, and he gave that shirk of the shoulder, which only those who have served in the in-

fantry can figure to themselves — that shirk which the soldier gives to raise his knapsack, and to lighten its weight for a moment : it is a habit of the soldier, which, when he becomes an officer, he cannot break himself of. After this convulsive gesture, he took a sip of his wine in the cocoa-nut shell, gave a kick of encouragement on the belly to his little mule, and began.

CHAPTER V.

HISTORY OF THE RED SEAL.

You must know, in the first place, my lad, that I was born at Brest: I began life in the army, earning my half-ration and my half-pay at the age of nine years, my father being a soldier in the Guards. But, as I was fond of the sea, one fine night, while I was on furlough at Brest, I stowed myself away in the hold of a merchantman bound for India; I was not discovered till the ship was out at sea, and the captain chose rather to make me a cabin-boy than to throw me overboard. When the Revolution came, I had made some way, and had in my turn become captain of a small tight merchant vessel, having skimmed the sea for fifteen years. As the old royal navy — a good old navy, faith! —was suddenly stripped of officers, the captains of the merchant navy were taken to supply their places. I had done some business in the privateering line, which I shall tell you about by-and-

by. I was appointed to the command of a brig of war called the Marat.

On the 28th of Fructidor, 1797, I received orders to sail for Cayenne. I was to carry out sixty soldiers, and one person condemned to transportation, the only one left out of one hundred and ninety-three by the Decade frigate, which had taken all the others on board a few days before. I had orders to treat this person with indulgence; and the first letter of the Directory inclosed a second, sealed with three red seals, one of which was as big again as the other two. I was forbidden to open this letter till I should reach the first degree of north latitude, and the twenty-seventh or twenty-eighth of longitude, that is to say, till I was near passing the Line.

This large letter was of a very particular shape. It was long, and so closely folded that I could not read any thing on peeping in at the ends, or through the envelope. I am not superstitious; but I really did feel a dread of that letter. I put it in my cabin, under the glass of a shabby English clock fixed up over my cot. That cot was a real seaman's cot — you must know what kind of one I mean. But, what am I saying! you are not above sixteen at

most; you cannot have seen any thing of that sort.

The bed-chamber of a queen cannot be kept more tidy than that of a seaman, be it said without meaning to boast of ourselves. Every thing has its particular place and its particular nail. Nothing must be stirred. Let the ship roll as much as she will, nothing can be deranged. The furniture is made to suit the form of the ship and of the little chamber that one occupies. My bed was a coffer. When it was opened I lay down on it; when it was shut, it was my sofa, and I smoked my pipe upon it. Sometimes it was my table, and then we made seats of two or three little barrels that were in the cabin. My floor was waxed and rubbed, like mahogany; it shone like a diamond; it was a real mirror. Oh! it was a snug little cabin! And my brig, too, was not to be sneered at. We often had rare fun on board, and the voyage this time commenced agreeably enough, only that ——: but I must not forestall my story.

We had a fine north-north-west wind, and I was just engaged in putting that letter under the glass of my clock when my prisoner entered my cabin, leading by the hand a charming creature of seventeen. He told me that he was him-

self nineteen — a handsome lad, though rather pale, and too fair for a man. He was a man for all that, and a man who behaved himself on the occasion much better than many older ones would have done, as you shall hear. Well, his pretty wife was hanging upon his arm; she was fresh and frolicsome as a child. They looked, for all the world, like a pair of turtle-doves. It was quite delightful to see them, that it was.

So I said to them: "Well, children, you are come to pay a visit to the old captain; 'tis very kind of you. I am carrying you a great way; but so much the better, we shall have time to get acquainted. I am sorry to receive the lady without my coat; but I was just going to nail this great lubberly letter up yonder. Perhaps you will help me a little."

The good young creatures actually set about it directly. The husband held the hammer and the wife the nails, and handed them to me as I asked for them; and she said, laughing the while, "To the right — to the left — captain!" according to the motion given to my clock by the lurching of the ship. I fancy I hear her still with her sweet voice: "To the left—to the right — captain!" She was making game of me. "Ah," said I, "you little rogue, I'll set

your husband to scold you ; see if I don't." And then she jumped up to his neck and kissed him. Indeed, they were good creatures, and that was the way our acquaintance began. We were at once the best of friends.

We had a capital passage, too. I always had weather made on purpose. As I had never had any but black faces on board, I made my two young lovers dine with me every day. This cheered me. When we had finished our biscuit and our fish, the young couple would sit looking at each other as though they had never seen one another before. I then burst into a hearty laugh, and rallied them. They then laughed along with me. You would have laughed too, had you seen us like three idiots, not knowing what ailed us. It was really funny to see them so fond of one another. They were always contented any where, and always satisfied with what was given them. And yet they were upon allowance, like all of us; I merely added a little Swedish brandy when they dined with me; but only a small glass, to keep up my rank. They slept in a hammock, where the ship rolled them about, like those two pears, which I have yonder in my wet handkerchief. They were brisk and happy. I did like you—I asked them

no questions. What need had a seafaring man like me to know their name and their affairs. I was carrying them to the other side of the sea, as I should have carried a couple of birds of paradise.

By the time we had been a month at sea, I could not help looking upon them as my children. Every day, when I called them, they came and sat down beside me. The young man wrote on my table, that is to say on my bed, and, when I asked him, he assisted me to take my observation: he could do it soon as well as I could; I was sometimes quite astonished at it. His young wife seated herself on a little barrel and fell to sewing.

One day, when we were sitting together in this way, I said to them: "I can't help thinking, my young friends, what a pretty family picture we make here: I don't mean to question you, but probably you have not more money than you need, and you are both too delicate to dig and to delve, as the people transported to Cayenne do. 'Tis a horrid country, I tell you, frankly; but I — an old sun-dried wolf's skin— I could live there like a lord. If you have, as it seems to me—mind, I have no wish to question you — some little friendship for me, I would

cheerfully quit my old brig, and settle there with you, if you like. For my part, I have no family whatever but a dog; I am tired of this sort of life; you would be company for me. I could assist you in many ways; and I have picked up a tolerable sum by very honest smuggling, on which we might live, and which I would leave you whenever I should turn up the whites of my eyes, to speak politely."

They eyed one another in the utmost astonishment, looking as though they thought I was not telling the truth; and the girl ran, as she always did, and threw her arms about the other's neck, and seated herself on his knees, with a face as red as your coat, and weeping at the same time. He clasped her very close in his arms, and I saw tears in his eyes too: he gave me his hand, and turned paler than usual. She spoke to him in a low tone, and her long fair hair, having got loose, dropped over his shoulder like a cable that is suddenly uncoiled, because she was brisk as a fish—that hair—ah! had you but seen it! it was like gold. As they continued to talk low, the young man kissing her forehead every now and then, and she weeping, I began to be impatient.

"Well," I said to them at last, "how do you like my proposal?"

"But —— but, captain, you are very kind," said the husband, "but you forget — you could not live with persons condemned to transportation;" and he cast down his eyes.

"I know not," said I, "for my part, what you have done to be transported; but you will tell me some day, or let it alone, just as you please. You do not look to me to have a conscience that is very heavily burdened, and I am very sure that I have done worse things in my life than you, poor innocents. However, while you are in my custody, you shall not be taken from me, don't imagine that; I will cut your throats first, like a pair of pigeons. But, the epaulette once thrown off, I care neither for admiral nor for any thing else."

"But," replied he, sorrowfully, shaking his brown, though somewhat powdered head, as was still the fashion at that time, "I cannot help thinking that it would be dangerous for you, captain, to appear to know us. We laugh, because we are young; we look happy, because we love one another; but I have wretched moments when I think of the future, and know not what will become of my poor Laura."

He pressed anew the head of his young wife to his bosom. "That was what I was to say to

the captain, was it not, my dear? You would have said the same thing, would you not?"

I took my pipe and rose, because I began to feel my eyes somewhat moist, and that is not at all in my way.

"Come, come," said I, "this will all be cleared up hereafter. If the smoke annoys the lady, I will shift my quarters."

She rose, her face all in a glow, and wet with tears, like that of a child who has been scolded.

"But then," said she, looking at my clock, "the letter! — though you two seem to think nothing of it."

I felt something strike all through me, something tugging at my heart, as she said this.

"By my troth," said I, "I thought nothing of it, for my part. And a pretty piece of business I should have made of it. If we had passed the first degree of north latitude, the only thing I could do would be to throw myself overboard. Surely I am to be lucky, since that girl has reminded me of the rascally letter."

I then turned to my chart, and when I saw that we had still a week good at least, I felt my head relieved, but not my heart, though I knew not why.

"Indeed," said I, "the Directory does not

jest on the article of obedience. Come, I am all right again for a while. The time has run away so quick, I had clean forgot that."

Well, sir, there we all three stood, with our noses cocked up in the air, gaping at that letter, as if we expected it to speak to us. What particularly struck me was, that the sun, darting through the bull's-eye, fell upon the glass of the clock, and made the great red seal more conspicuous: it looked exactly like a face that one sees in the fire.

"Would not one swear that the eyes were starting out of the head?" said I, to amuse them.

"O, my friend," cried the young woman, "that looks like stains of blood!"

"Pooh! pooh!" said the husband, giving her his arm, "you are wrong, Laura; it looks like a letter to give notice of a wedding. Come, rest yourself, my love, come: why should that letter disturb you?"

Away they started, as if a ghost had been behind them, and went up to the deck. I was left alone with that big letter, and I recollect that, while smoking my pipe, I continued to look at it, as if its red eyes had fascinated mine, as those of serpents are said to do. Its great pale

face, its third seal, larger than the eyes, wide open, gaping like a wolf's jaws, put me into an ill humour. I took my coat, and hung it before the clock, that I might neither see the hour nor the evil-boding letter.

I went upon deck to finish my pipe, and there I remained till night.

We were then off the Cape de Verd Islands. The Marat was running with the wind astern, at the rate of ten knots, without distressing herself. The night was the finest I ever saw in my life near the tropics. The moon was rising above the horizon, as large as a sun; the sea cut her in two, and became quite white, like a sheet of snow, sprinkled with little diamonds. I watched it, seated on my bench, smoking my pipe. The officer of the watch and the seamen said nothing, and looked like me at the shadow of the brig on the water. I was glad that I did not hear any thing. I am fond of silence and order, for my part. I had forbidden all noise and all fires. I perceived, however, a small red line, nearly under my feet. I should have flown into a passion directly, but, as it was in the cabin of my young prisoners, I determined to ascertain what they were about before I got angry. I had but the trouble of stooping down, when I

could see through a large crevice into the little cabin.

The young woman was on her knees, saying her prayers. There was a little lamp, which lighted the place. She was stripped to her chemise; I could see her bare shoulders, her little naked feet, and her long loose fair hair. I would have drawn back; but I said to myself, "Pooh! an old soldier! what does it signify?" and I kept looking on.

Her husband was sitting on a little trunk, his head resting upon his hand, looking at her praying. She lifted up her face, as if to Heaven, and I saw her large blue eyes swimming in tears, like those of a Magdalen. While she was praying, he laid hold of the end of her long hair, and kissed it, without making any noise. When she had finished, she made the sign of the cross, and smiled so sweetly, as if she were going to paradise. I observed that he too made the sign of the cross, but as if he were ashamed of it. In fact, it is singular for a man.

She rose upon her feet, kissed him, and stretched herself first in the hammock, into which he lifted her, without speaking, as one would put a child into a swing. The heat was suffocating: she seemed pleased to be rocked

by the motion of the ship, and appeared to be just dropping to sleep. Her small white feet were crossed and raised to the level of her head; and her whole body covered with her white chemise. She was a love, that she was!

"My dear," said she, half asleep, "are you not coming? It is very late, you know."

He still continued, his brow resting on his hands, without replying. She began to be rather uneasy—the poor young creature! and, putting her head out of the hammock, like a bird out of its nest, she looked at him with mouth half-open, not daring to speak.

At length he said to her: "Ah, my dear Laura, the nearer we approach to America, the sadder I grow, and I cannot help it. It appears to me, I cannot tell why, that the time spent in this voyage will have been the happiest part of our lives."

"So it seems to me too," said she. "I should like never to get there."

He looked at her, clasping his hands with a transport of which you can form no conception.

"And yet, my angel, you always weep while you are praying," said he; "that distresses me exceedingly, because I know what you are

thinking of, and I fancy that you repent what you have done."

"I repent!" said she, with an expression of acute pain, "I repent having accompanied you, my dear! Do you suppose that I love you the less for having belonged to you so short a time? Is one not a woman, does one not know one's duty, at seventeen? Did not my mother and my sisters say that it was my duty to go with you to Guiana? Did they not declare that in doing this I should be doing nothing extraordinary? I am only astonished that you should be so deeply touched by my conduct: why, it is but perfectly natural. And now I cannot imagine how you can think that I have any thing to repent of, when I am with you, to help you to live, or to die with you if you die."

All this she said in so sweet a voice that you would have sworn it was music. I was melted. The young man began to sigh, and kissed a delicate hand and a bare arm which she held out to him.

"O Laurette! my Laurette!" said he, "when I consider that, if we had delayed our marriage but four days longer, I should have been arrested alone, I should have been sent off alone, I cannot forgive myself."

The lovely girl then stretched her two beautiful white arms, bare to the shoulders, out of the hammock to him, fondling him and stroking his forehead, his hair, his eyes, and then she took hold of his head to draw it to her and hide it in her bosom. She laughed like a child, and said a number of tender things, such as I had never heard the like of. She clapped her hands over his mouth, that she might have all the talk to herself. She said, while toying and taking her long hair by way of handkerchief to wipe his eyes:

"Tell me, my dear, is it not a great deal better to have with thee a wife who loves thee? I am content, for my part, to go to Cayenne; I shall see savages, and cocoa-nut trees, like those of Paul and Virginia, shall I not? We will each plant one for ourselves. We shall see who will be the best gardener. We will build a little hut for us two. I will work all day and all night, if you wish it. I am strong; look at my arms; see, I can almost lift you. Don't make game of me. I am a good hand at embroidery besides; and surely there must be a town somewhere or other, where I can get employment. Then I will give lessons in drawing and in music too, if they want them; and if there are

people who can read, thou wilt write for them, wilt thou not?"

I recollect that the poor fellow was so cut that he gave a loud cry when she said this.

"Write!" cried he, "write!"

And he laid hold of his clenched right hand with the left, and grasped it tight.

"Ah! write! why did I ever learn to write! Write! it is the profession of a madman! .... I believed in their liberty of the press! .... Where did I pick up wit? And how was it employed? For printing five or six poor ideas, read only by those who are fond of such things, thrown into the fire by those who dislike them; answering no other end than to draw persecution upon us! As for me, well and good! but for thee, darling angel, who hadst been scarcely four days a wife! .... What hadst thou done? Tell me, I beseech thee, how I could ever suffer thee to carry thy kindness to such an extent as to accompany me hither. Dost thou even know where thou art, my poor Laurette? Knowest thou whither thou art going? Ere long, my love, thou wilt be sixteen hundred leagues from thy mother and thy sisters .... And for my sake! all this for my sake!"

She hid her head for a moment in the ham-

mock, and I, from above, could perceive that she was weeping, but he, being lower, could not see her face; and, when she put it forth again from under the sheet, it was already smiling for the purpose of cheering him.

"In fact, we are not rich at present," said she, laughing heartily; "look you, here is my purse; I have but a single louis left. And you?"

He fell a-laughing too, like a child.

"Why, faith!" he replied, "I had a crown, but I gave it to the lad who carried your trunk."

"Pshaw! what signifies that?" said she, making her little white fingers snap like castagnettes, "one is never in higher spirits than when one has nothing; and then, have I not in reserve the two diamond rings which my mother gave me? Those are serviceable every where and on every occasion, are they not? Besides, I do think that kind creature the captain has not told all his good intentions towards us, and that he well knows what is in the letter. It must surely be a recommendation for us to the governor of Cayenne."

"Perhaps," said he; "who knows?"

"It must be so," replied his young wife.

"Thou art so good that I am certain the government has banished thee only for a short time, but means thee no further harm."

She had said this so prettily, calling me that kind creature the captain, that I was quite moved and softened, and I even rejoiced in my heart that she had perhaps guessed right. They then began kissing again, when I stamped pretty hard upon the deck to make them have done.

"Don't you know, my young friends," I cried, "that orders have been given to put out all lights on board? Blow out your lamp, if you please."

They blew out the lamp, and I heard them tittering and chatting quite low in the dark, like schoolboys. I again began walking the deck alone, while smoking my pipe. All the stars of the tropic were at their posts, large as little moons. I looked at them while breathing an air which felt fresh and sweet.

I said to myself that those poor young things had certainly guessed the truth, and the thought was quite a cordial to my spirits. I could have laid any wager that the five Directors had changed their minds, and recommended them to me; I could not well explain to myself in what manner, because there are state affairs that I

never understood, not I; but, in short, I believed this, and, without knowing why, I was easy.

I went down to my cabin, and looked again at the letter under my old uniform. It had quite a different aspect; it seemed to smile, and the seals appeared to be rose-coloured. I had no farther doubt that it was favourable, and I made a little sign of friendship to it.

Nevertheless, I put my old coat over it again: it annoyed me.

We never once thought of looking at it for several days, and we were merry; but when we approached the first degree of latitude, we began to be silent.

One fine morning, I awoke a good deal surprised to feel no motion in the ship. To confess the truth, I never sleep but with one eye, as they say, and, missing the rolling of the ship, I opened both eyes. We had got into a dead calm; and we were in the first degree of latitude and the twenty-seventh of longitude. I put my nose upon deck: the sea was smooth as a tub of oil; all the sails flapped against the masts, like empty bladders. I said immediately, "Come, I shall now have time to read thee!" looking askance towards the letter. I waited

till evening, till sunset. But, as I should be forced to come to the point at last, I opened the clock-case, and snatched the sealed order out of it! Well, my dear fellow, I held it in my hand a full quarter of an hour before I could take courage to read it. At length, said I to myself, "This is too silly!" and I broke the three seals with my thumb, and pounded the great red seal to powder.

After I had read the paper, I rubbed my eyes, thinking that they must have deceived me. I read the letter over again from beginning to end; I read it a third time; I then began with the last line and went up to the first. I could not trust my senses. My legs shook a little under me; I sat down. I felt a certain trembling in the skin of my face; I rubbed my cheeks with rum, which I poured into the hollow of my hands. I pitied myself for being so stupid as that; but it was the affair of a moment; I went up into the air.

Laurette was so handsome that day that I would not go near her: she had on quite a plain white dress, arms bare, and her long hair flowing as she always wore it. She amused herself with dipping her other dress, fastened to a cord, in the sea, and laughed while striving to catch

a kind of sea-weed, resembling bunches of grapes, which floats upon the waters of the Tropics.

"Come and look at the grapes! come quick!" she cried; and her husband went close to her and leant over her, but did not look at the water, because he was looking at her with an air of deep emotion.

I made a sign to the young man that I wanted to speak to him on the quarter-deck. She turned about. I know not what my face was like, but she dropped her cord, grasped him strongly by the arm, and said: "Oh! don't go; see how pale he is!"

That might well be the case; it was enough to make one turn pale. He came to me, nevertheless, on the deck; while she leaned against the main-mast and watched us. We walked up and down a considerable time without speaking. I was smoking a cigar, which I thought bitter, and I flung it into the water. He followed me with his eyes; I took him by the arm. I felt choking, by my faith, 'pon my word of honour, I was choking.

"Come now, my young friend," said I to him at last, "tell me something of your history. What the devil have you done to those sons of

bitches of *lawyers*, who stick themselves up like five bits of kings? It seems they are desperately enraged against you. 'Tis very odd!"

He shrugged his shoulders, drooping his head, with so mild a look — poor lad! — and said to me: "Good God, captain, no great matter! why, a few verses on the Directory, that's all."

"Not possible!" said I.

"True, I assure you, and the verses were none of the best either. I was arrested on the 15th of Fructidor, taken to La Force, tried on the 16th, and at first sentenced to death, and afterwards to transportation, out of kindness."

"'Tis droll! said I. "Those Directors are very tetchy fellows; for that letter which you have seen is an order to me to shoot you."

He made no answer, but smiled, and kept up a very good countenance for a youth of nineteen. He merely looked at his wife, and wiped his forehead, on which the perspiration stood in big drops. I had as many at least on my face, and other drops in my eyes.

"It appears," continued, "that those citizens did not choose to settle your business on land; they have thought that here it would be

less noticed. But it is a most painful thing for me; for, good fellow though you are, I am forced to obey: the death-warrant is there, all regular, and the order for execution signed and sealed—nothing is wanting."

He bowed to me very politely, reddening at the same time.

"I ask no favour, captain," said he, with a voice gentle as usual; "I should never forgive myself if I were to cause you to violate your duty. I should merely like to say a few words to Laura, and I beg you to protect her, in case she should survive me, which I do not think she will."

"Oh! as for that, it is but fair, my lad," said I. "If it is your wish, I will take her to her family, on my return to France, and I will not leave her till she insists on seeing me no more. But I can't help thinking you may flatter yourself that she will not get over this blow—poor dear little creature!"

He laid hold of both my hands, pressed them, and said: "My good captain, you suffer more than myself, I am aware, from what you have yet to do; but there is no help for it. I rely upon you to take care of the little that belongs to me for her, to protect her, and to see that

she receives what her aged mother may leave her — will you not? — to preserve her life, her honour, will you not?—and also that attention may be paid to her health. Stay," he added in a lower tone, "I have to tell you that she is very delicate; her chest is often affected to such a degree that she faints several times in a day; she ought always to wrap herself up well. In short, you will supply the place of father and mother and myself to her as much as possible—won't you? If she could keep the rings that her mother gave her, I should be glad. But if there is a necessity for their being sold for her, why then they must. My poor Laurette, see how beautiful she is!"

As this began to be a great deal too tender for me, I felt annoyed, and could not help frowning. I had talked to him in a cheerful way to keep up my firmness; but I could stand it no longer. "'Tis enough," said I, at last, "between honourable men. The rest follows of course. Go and speak to her, and let us cut the matter short."

I gave his hand a friendly squeeze, but he did not let go mine, and eyed me with a singular look. "I'll tell you what," I added, "if I have a piece of advice to give you, it is to say

not a word to her about this matter. We will arrange the thing without her knowing any thing about it, or you either; be easy, that's my affair."

"Ah! that alters the case," said he; "I was not aware: that will be better indeed. Besides, that leave-taking, that parting, upsets one."

"Yes, yes," said I, "don't be a child; that is much better. Don't kiss her, my friend, don't kiss her, if you can avoid it, or that will spoil all."

I gave him another hearty shake of the hand, and left him alone. Oh! it was a cruel task for me, this!

He appeared to me to keep the secret closely enough, faith! for they walked about arm in arm for a quarter of an hour, and came back to the ship's side, to lay hold again of the cord with the dress, which one of my cabin-boys had fished up out of the water.

Night fell all at once. This was the moment which I had resolved to seize. But that moment has lasted for me till this very day, and I shall drag it after me all my life, like a cannon-ball.

Here the old commandant was obliged to pause. I abstained from speaking, lest I should

divert the current of his ideas. He resumed, striking his breast: That moment, I tell you, I cannot yet comprehend. I felt anger pulling me by the hair, and at the same time some power or other urged me on and forced me to obey.

I called my officers, and I said to one of them: "Hoist out a boat; since we are now executioners. Put that young woman into it, and push off from the ship till you hear the firing of small arms. You will then return."

To obey a scrap of paper! for what more was it! There must certainly have been something in the air that threw a spell upon me. I saw the young man from a distance — oh! it was terrible to see! — kneeling before his Laurette, and kissing her hands and her feet. Don't you think I was the most miserable of wretches?

I cried like a madman: "Part them! we are all villains! Part them! .... The poor Republic is a dead body. Directors, Directory, are the vermin preying upon it. I will quit the sea. I fear not all your lawyers; let them be told what I say, for aught I care." But I did care about them, though. Oh! how glad I should have been to have them in my power! I would have had all five of them shot, the

scoundrels! By Heaven, I would too! I should have made no more account of their lives than of the rain that is now falling, not I . . . . I did care about them . . . . Such a life as mine . . . . Ah, yes, indeed, a miserable life! . . . .

The voice of the commandant gradually died away, and became as indistinct as his words were incoherent; and he walked on, knitting his brows and biting his lips, in a fearful fit of fury and abstraction. He had little convulsive motions, and struck his mule with the sheath of his sword, as if he meant to kill him. What astonished me was to see the sallow skin of his face turn to a dark red. He unbuttoned and pulled open his coat at the breast, uncovering it to the wind and the rain. We thus continued to walk on in profound silence. I saw plainly that he would not speak again of himself, and that I must make up my mind to question him.

"I can easily imagine," said I, as if he had finished his story, "that, after so cruel an adventure, a man would conceive a horror of his profession."

"Oh! the profession! are you mad?" said he, sharply. "It is not the profession. Never will

the captain of a ship be forced to play the part of executioner, but when there shall come governments of murderers and robbers, which shall take advantage of the habit that a poor man has of obeying blindly, of obeying in all cases, of obeying like a mere machine, in spite of his heart."

At the same time, he drew from his pocket a red handkerchief, held it to his face, and began to weep like a child. I pulled up for a moment, as if to put my stirrup to rights, and, falling behind the cart, I walked after it for some time, feeling that he would be too much humbled if I were to observe too closely his passion of tears.

I had judged rightly; for, in about a quarter of an hour, he too came behind his lowly equipage, and asked me if I had any razors in my portmanteau. I simply replied that, having as yet no beard, razors would only be a useless incumbrance. But he did not stop there; it was to talk of something else that he had come. I perceived with pleasure that he was about to revert to his history, for he said abruptly: "Mayhap you never saw a ship in your life?"

"I never did," answered I, "unless at the Panorama in Paris, and I cannot boast much of

the nautical knowledge that I have derived from it."

"Of course you do not know what the cat-head is?"

"I can't say that I do," I replied.

"It is a large piece of timber projecting from each bow, from which the anchor is suspended, before letting go. When a man is shot, he is usually placed there," added he, in a lower tone.

"Ah! I understand; because then he falls at once into the water."

Without making any reply, he began to describe all the kinds of boats that a brig carries, and their position in the ship; and then, without any order in his ideas, he continued his narrative with that affected air of indifference which long service invariably imparts, because it is requisite to display, before inferiors, contempt of danger, contempt of men, contempt of life, contempt of death, and contempt of one's self; and hence it is that under a rough envelope is almost always concealed profound sensibility. The harshness of the military man is like an iron mask over a noble face, like a dungeon of stone enclosing a royal prisoner.

Those boats, he resumed, hold six men. They got into them, carrying Laura along with them, before she had time to cry out or to speak. Oh! here is a thing for which no honest man can forgive himself, when he is the cause of it. 'Tis of no use talking! one never can forget such a thing! . . . . Ah! what weather we have! . . . . What devil has urged me to tell this story? when I begin it, I never can stop — but it is just finished. 'Tis a story that gripes one like Jurançon wine. — My God, what weather!—My cloak is wet through.

I was telling you, I believe, about dear little Laurette. — Poor young creature!—What awkward people there are in the world! The officer was stupid enough to take the boat ahead of the brig. After all, it is but fair to admit that one cannot foresee every thing. I calculated, for my part, that night would hide the affair, and never thought of the flash from a dozen muskets firing at once. And so, faith, she saw from the boat her husband fall into the sea, shot.

If there is a God above, he knows how all that I have been telling you came to pass: I know nothing about it, not I—but people did see it and hear it, as I see you and hear you. At

the moment of firing, she clapped her hand to her head, as if a ball had struck her brow, and sat down in the boat without fainting, without shrieking, without speaking, and returned to the brig with the crew when they pleased and how they pleased. I went to her; I talked to her a long while, and in the best fashion I could. She seemed to listen to me, and looked me in the face, at the same time rubbing her forehead. But she did not understand me: and her brow was red and her face pale as ashes. She trembled in every limb, as if afraid of every body. This never left her. She does so still, poor little thing! idiot, or crazy, or lunatic, whichever you please. Never has a word been drawn from her, unless when she tells one to take out something that is in her head.

From that moment I grew as melancholy as herself, and I heard something within me saying: *Stay with her as long as she lives, and take care of her.* I have done so. On my return to France, I desired to be removed with my rank to the land forces, having taken a dislike to the sea, because I had cast innocent blood into it. I sought out Laura's family. Her mother was dead. Her sisters, to whom I took the poor creature, would not have her, and proposed to

me to send her to Charenton. I turned my back on them, and I kept her myself.

Ah, my God! if you would like to see her, comrade, you may: wait, stop a moment! Ho, ho, mule!

CHAPTER VI.

HOW I CONTINUED MY ROUTE.

So he stopped the poor mule, which appeared to be delighted at this proposal. At the same time, he lifted up the oil-cloth of his little cart, as if to put to rights the straw which almost filled it, and I beheld a very melancholy sight. I saw two blue eyes, of extraordinary size, admirable in point of form, starting from a long, pale, emaciated face, inundated by perfectly straight, fair hair. I saw, in truth, nothing but those two eyes, which were all that was left of that poor woman, for the rest of her was dead. Her forehead was red, her cheeks hollow and white, and bluish on the cheek-bones. She was crouched among the straw, so that one could just see her two knees rising above it, and on them she was playing all alone at dominoes. She looked at us for a moment, trembled a long time, smiled at me a little, and began to play

again. It seemed to me that she was striving to make out how her right hand beat her left.

"Look you," said the *chef de bataillon* to me, "she has been playing that game for a month. To-morrow she will perhaps begin another, that will last as long. 'Tis droll, faith!"

At the same time he began to replace the oil-skin of his cap, which the rain had somewhat deranged. "Poor Laurette," sighed I, "thou hast lost for ever!"

I drew my horse up to the cart, and offered her my hand. She gave me her's mechanically, and with a smile of great sweetness. I remarked with surprise that she had diamond rings on her fingers; I had no doubt that they were the same which she had received from her mother, and asked myself how poverty could have left them there. For an entire world I would not have made this observation to the old commandant; but, as he followed me with his eyes, and saw mine fixed on Laura's fingers, he said to me with a certain air of pride:

"They are very fine diamonds, a'n't they? They might be of service in case of need, but I never could bear to think of her parting with them, poor girl. When one touches them, she weeps; she never takes them off. For the rest,

she never murmurs; and she works with her needle now and then. I have kept my word to her poor dear husband, and indeed I don't repent it. I have never left her, and have every where given out that she was my daughter who was deranged. This was a safeguard to her. In the army things are managed more easily than people suppose in Paris. She has made all the Emperor's campaigns with me, and I have always brought her out of the scrape. I keep her constantly warm. With straw and a little carriage, that is never impossible. She has always been kept very tidy; and I, being *chef de bataillon*, with good pay, my pension of the Legion of Honour, and the Napoleon month, the pay for which was double, in time I got quite used to the business, and she was no inconvenience whatever to me. On the contrary, her childish ways sometimes raised a laugh among the officers of the 7th light."

He then went up to her, and patted her on the shoulder, as he would have done to his little mule.

"Well, my dear, speak; say something to the lieutenant here; look you, just a little sign with your head."

She turned again to her dominoes.

"Oh!" said he, "she is rather out of humour to-day, because it rains. However, she never catches cold. Mad people, to be sure, are never ill — a convenient thing, in that respect. At the Beresina, and during the whole retreat from Moscow, she went bare-headed. Come, my dear, play away; never mind us; do as you please, do, Laurette!"

She took his hand, which he had placed upon her shoulder — a large, brown, wrinkled hand — raised it timidly to her lips, and kissed it like a poor slave. My heart was wrung by that kiss, and I abruptly turned my horse's head another way.

"Shall we continue our march, commandant?" said I. "Night will overtake us before we get to Bethune."

The commandant carefully scraped off with the point of his sword the yellow mud that covered his boots, then mounting the foot-board of the cart, he drew over Laura's head the hood of a cloth cloak which she wore. He took off his black silk cravat, and tied it round the neck of his adopted daughter; after which, he gave the usual kick to the mule, and, with the accustomed shirk of his shoulder, said, "On, lazy-bones!" So away we went again.

The rain still fell dismally; the gray sky, and the gray earth, stretched away without end; a sort of dull light, a pale sun, drowned in haze, was sinking behind some great mills that were not going. We fell again into profound silence.

I looked at my old commandant. He strode on with yet undiminished vigour, while his mule was quite knocked up, and even my horse began to hang his head. This brave fellow took off his cap, from time to time, to wipe his bald brow and the scanty gray hair of his head, or his bushy eyebrows, or his white moustaches, dripping with rain. He cared not what effect his narrative might have produced upon me. He had not made himself a whit better or worse than he was. He had not deigned to draw his own portrait. He thought not of himself; and, in about a quarter of an hour, he commenced in the same tone a much longer story of one of Marshal Massena's campaigns, in which he had formed his battalion into a square, against I know not what cavalry. I did not listen to him, though he took great pains to demonstrate to me the superiority of the foot to the horse-soldier.

Night came on; we could not proceed fast. The mud became thicker and deeper. Nothing

upon the route, and nothing at the end of it. We halted at the foot of a dead tree, the only tree by the road-side. He attended first to his mule, as I did to my horse. He then looked into the cart, as a mother would do in the cradle of her infant. I heard him say: "Here, my dear, wrap this coat about your feet, and try to sleep. Come, that's right; she has not had a drop of rain upon her. Ha! the devil! she has broken my watch, which I left about her neck! Oh, my poor silver watch! Come, never mind, my child, try to sleep. We shall have fine weather presently. 'Tis odd, she always has a fever; that is the way with mad people. Stay, here is some chocolate for thee, my dear."

He backed the cart against the tree, and we sat down between the wheels, under shelter from the ceaseless rain, having only a very small loaf apiece for our scanty supper.

"I am very sorry that we have nothing else," said he, "but this is better than the horse-flesh, roasted under the ashes, and gunpowder sprinkled over it instead of salt, as we ate it in Russia. The poor little woman! I must give her the best I have; you see, I always keep her apart. She cannot bear to have a man near

her, since the affair of the letter. I am old, and she seems to believe that I am her father; nevertheless, she would strangle me, if I were to attempt merely to kiss her forehead. Education always leaves them something, it seems, for I never saw her forget to hide herself like a nun. 'Tis odd, faith!"

As he thus spoke, we heard her sigh, and say: "Take away this ball; take this ball from me!" I rose: he made me sit down again.

"Don't move, don't move," said he; "it is nothing. She often says that, because she fancies that she feels a ball in her head. This does not prevent her from doing any thing one tells her, and that too with great meekness."

I listened sadly to him, without replying. I began to calculate that, from 1797 to 1815, in which we then were, eighteen years had thus been passed by this man. I remained long in silence by his side, striving to comprehend this character and this destiny. At length, I abruptly seized his hand and shook it with enthusiasm. He appeared quite surprised at this movement.

"You are a worthy man!" I exclaimed.

"Why, how so?" he asked. "Is it on account of this poor creature? You are aware,

child, that it was a duty. 'Tis a long while that I have practised self-denial;" and he then began to talk again about Massena.

By day-light next morning, we reached Bethune, a small, ugly, fortified town, the ramparts of which had, you would say, by contracting their circle, squeezed the houses one upon another. All was confusion there: it was the moment of an alert. The inhabitants were beginning to remove the white flags from the windows, and to sew together the three colours in their houses. The drums were beating to arms, and the trumpets sounding *To horse!* by command of the Duke de Berry. The long Picard waggons, carrying the Cent-Suisses and their baggage, the cannon of the Gardes du Corps hastening to the ramparts, the carriages of the princes, the squadrons of the Red Companies that were forming, encumbered the town. The sight of the king's gendarmes and of the mousquetaires made me forget my old fellow-traveller. I joined my company, and I lost in the crowd the little cart and its humble owners. To my great regret, it was for ever that I lost them.

This was the first time in my life that the recesses of a real soldier's heart were laid open

to my view. This meeting revealed to me a character to which I was a stranger, and which the country neither appreciates nor treats well: I placed it thenceforward very high in my esteem. I have since frequently looked around me for another man resembling this, and capable of the like complete and reckless self-denial. Now, during the fourteen years that I have spent in the army, it is only there, and especially in the poor and slighted ranks of the infantry, that I have met with men of that antique character, pushing the sentiment of duty to its utmost consequences, feeling no remorse on account of obedience, no shame on account of poverty, simple in manners and language, proud of the glory of their country and careless of their own, burying themselves with pleasure in their obscurity, and sharing with the unfortunate the black bread which they pay for with their blood.

For a long time, I knew not what had become of this humble *chef de bataillon*. He had not told me his name, neither had I asked him for it. At length, one day, in 1825, I think it was, being in a coffee-house with an old captain of infantry of the line, to whom I described him while waiting for the parade, he said: "Ah, my

dear fellow, I knew that poor devil well. A brave man he was too: he was taken off by a cannon-ball at Waterloo. He had, in fact, left along with the baggage a sort of crazy girl, whom we took to the hospital at Amiens on our way to the army of the Loire, and who died there raving at the end of three days."

"I am not surprised at that," said I; "she had lost the father who nursed and provided for her."

"What is it you say?—*father!*—nonsense!" added he, with a look meant to be at once shrewd and licentious.

"I say that they are beating the *rappel*," replied I, rising and leaving the house—and I too practised self-denial.

PART II.

RECOLLECTIONS

OF

MILITARY SERVITUDE

CONTINUED.

PART II.

RECOLLECTIONS OF MILITARY SERVITUDE.

CHAPTER I.

ON RESPONSIBILITY.

I STILL recollect the consternation which this story produced in my soul; herein lay perhaps the principle of my slow cure for that disease — military enthusiasm. I felt all at once humbled at being obliged to run the risks of crime, and at finding in my hand the sword of the slave instead of the sabre of the chevalier. Many other similar facts came to my knowledge, and branded in my estimation that noble class of men whom I would fain have seen consecrated solely to the defence of the country.

Thus, during the reign of Terror, it happened that another captain of a ship received, in com-

mon with all the navy, from the committee of public welfare, the atrocious order to shoot all prisoners of war: he had the misfortune to take an English vessel, and the still greater misfortune to obey the order of the government. On returning to port, he rendered an account of its disgraceful execution, retired from the service, and died in a short time broken-hearted. This captain commanded the Boudeuse frigate, which had formerly sailed round the world under the command of M. de Bougainville. That great navigator shed tears over the tarnished honour of his old ship.

Will there never come a law that shall serve, on such occasions, to reconcile duty and conscience? Is the public voice in the wrong, when it is raised from age to age to absolve and to honour the disobedience of the Vicomte d'Orte, who, when Charles IX. ordered him to extend the Parisian massacre of St. Bartholomew to Dax, replied: "Sire, I have communicated your majesty's command to your faithful inhabitants and men at arms; I have found among them only good citizens and brave soldiers, but not one executioner."

And if he was right to refuse obedience, how is it that we live under laws which we deem rea-

sonable for inflicting death on any one who refuses this same implicit obedience! We admire the man who exercises freedom of judgment, and we put him to death: such an absurdity cannot prevail much longer. Means must be devised for determining under what circumstances deliberation shall be allowed to the armed man, and down to what rank the understanding shall be left free, and with it the exercise of conscience and of justice. Our system, in regard to all this, must some day be changed.

I am perfectly aware that this is a question of extreme difficulty, and which affects the very foundation of all discipline. So far from wishing to weaken that discipline, I am of opinion that it needs strengthening on many points among us, and that, before the enemy, the laws cannot be too Draconian. When the army turns its steeled breast towards the foreigner, let it march and act like a single man — that is quite right: but when it has faced about, and has only the mother-country before it, then, at least, it is fitting that it should find provident laws, which allow it to have filial bowels. It is also to be wished that immutable limits should be fixed, once for all, to those absolute orders

given to the armies by the supreme power, which has so frequently, in our history, fallen into unworthy hands. Let it never more be possible for a few adventurers, raised to the dictatorship, to transform into murderers four hundred thousand men of honour by a law which, like their reign, is but for a day!

Frequently, it is true, I perceived in the customs of the service that, owing perhaps to French carelessness and to the easy good-nature of our character, there prevailed in the armies, as if by way of compensation, and together with that misery of military Servitude, a sort of freedom of mind which soothed the humiliation of passive obedience; and, remarking in every soldier something open and nobly easy, I thought that this proceeded from a mind at rest and relieved from the enormous weight of responsibility. I was then very young, and I felt by degrees that this sentiment lightened my conscience: I looked upon every commander-in-chief as a sort of Moses, who had his terrible account to render to God alone, after he had said to the sons of Levi: "Put every man his sword by his side, and go in and out from gate to gate, throughout the camp, and slay every man his brother, and every man his companion,

and every man his neighbour; and there fell of the people that day about twenty-three thousand men," says Exodus, xxxii. 27; for I knew the Bible by heart, and that book and I were so inseparable, that, in the longest marches, it always accompanied me. The reader sees what was the first consolation that it afforded me.

I thought that I must be excessively unfortunate if one of my gold-laced Moseses were to order me to slay my whole family; and, in fact, no such thing ever happened to me, as I had very sagely conjectured. I thought too that, even if the impracticable peace of the Abbé de St. Pierre were established on earth, and though he himself were appointed to regularize that universal liberty and equality, he would want for this task a few regiments of Levites, whom he could order to gird on the sword, and whose obedience would draw down upon them the blessing of the Lord.

I sought thus to capitulate with the monstrous resignations of *passive obedience*, by considering to what divine source it was to be traced back, and how all social order seemed to be founded upon obedience: but I had need of many arguments and many paradoxes, before I could allow it to gain a footing in my soul. I was fond

enough of inflicting it, but I disliked having to pay it; I thought it admirably wise under my feet, but absurd above my head. I have since known many men reason in the same manner, who had not the excuse which I had then — I was a Levite of sixteen.

I had not yet extended my views to the entire father-land of our France; or to that other father-land which surrounds it, Europe; or to the father-land of humanity, the globe, which fortunately is becoming smaller every day, compressed by the hand of civilization. It had not yet occurred to me how much lighter the heart of the warrior would be in his bosom, if he were to feel in himself two men, one of whom should obey the other; if he knew that, after acting his wholly rigorous part in war, he should have a right to a part wholly beneficent and not less glorious in peace; if, on attaining a certain rank, he possessed the right of election; if, after being long mute in camps, he had his voice in the city; if he were the executer in the one of the laws which he should have made in the other; and if, to hide the blood-stained sword, he could put on the toga. Now, it is not impossible that all this may come to pass some day.

We are really destitute of pity to expect any man to be strong enough to be singly responsible for that armed nation which is put into his hand. It is a dangerous thing for governments themselves; for the present organization, which thus hangs upon one finger that whole electric chain of passive obedience, may, under certain circumstances, render the total overthrow of a state much too easy. Such a revolution, half formed and recruited, would but have to gain a minister at war in order to complete itself entirely. All the rest would follow of course, according to our laws, without a single link being able to withdraw itself from the commotion communicated from above.

No, I appeal to the heavings of conscience in every man who has seen the blood of his fellow-citizens spilt, or who has caused it o be spilt — a single head is not enough to support so heavy a weight as that of so many murders; so many heads as there are combatants would not be too many. In order to be responsible for the law of blood which they execute, it would be right that they should at least have thoroughly understood it. But the better institutions called for here will, themselves, be but very transient; for, once more I repeat it, armies and war have

nearly had their day: in spite of the words of a sophist to whom I have elsewhere adverted, it is not true that, even against foreign foes, war is *divine;* it is not true that *the earth is athirst for blood.* War is accursed of God and even of the men who wage it, and who have a secret horror of it, and, if the earth cries to heaven, it is only to beg of it the fresh water of its rivers and the pure dew of its clouds.

It is not, however, in early youth, all devoted to action, that I could have asked myself if there were not modern countries in which the man of war was the same as the man of peace, and not a man cut off from the family and set up against it as an enemy. I did not examine what it might be serviceable to us to borrow from the ancients on this point; many plans of a more rational organization of armies have been broached to no purpose. So far from putting any of them into execution, or merely bringing them forth to the light, it is probable that Power, be it what it may, will be more and more averse to them, having an interest in surrounding itself with gladiators in the struggle that is incessantly threatening: the idea will, nevertheless, assume a form and gain ground, as every necessary idea sooner or later does.

In the present state of things, how many good sentiments are there to cherish, and which might be elevated still more by the sentiment of a higher personal dignity! I have stored up many instances of this kind in my memory. I had about me, ready to furnish them, a great number of intimate friends, so cheerfully resigned to their reckless submission, so free in mind under the slavery of the body, that this recklessness seized me for a moment as it had done them, and with it that tranquillity of the soldier and the officer, that tranquillity which is precisely like that of the horse nobly measuring his step between the bridle and the spur, and proud of being not at all responsible.

Let me then be permitted to give, in the simple history of a brave man, and of a soldier family of which I had but a momentary glimpse, an example more soothing than the first of those long resignations of a whole life, full of honour, modesty, and urbanity, very common in our army, and the sight of which refreshes the mind when one lives, as I did, in an elegant world, from which one descends with pleasure, to study more natural manners, far as they may be behind the spirit of the times.

The army, such as it is, is a good book for

him to open who would study humanity. There he learns to put his hand to every thing, to the lowest as well as to the highest. The most delicate and the most opulent are forced to observe closely how poverty lives, and to live with it, to measure its coarse bread, and to weigh out its meat to it. But for the army, many a scion of nobility would not suspect how a soldier lives, thrives, and keeps himself in good case all the year round upon nine sous per day and a jug of fresh water, carrying at his back a knapsack, which, with all its contents, costs the country forty francs.

This simplicity of manners, this careless and joyous poverty of so many young men, this vigorous and sound existence, without false politeness or false sensibility, this manly tone given to every thing, this uniformity of sentiments imparted by discipline, are coarse bonds of habit, but difficult to break, and which are not destitute of a certain charm unknown to other professions. I have seen officers contract such a passionate fondness for this existence as not to be able to leave it for any time without *ennui*, even to return to those more engaging elegancies of life to which they have been accustomed. The regiments are convents of men,

but itinerant convents. Whithersoever they go, they carry with them their habits, stamped with gravity, silence, reserve, and scrupulous punctuality in fulfilling the severe vow of obedience.

The character of these recluses is indelible as that of monks, and never have I again seen the uniform of any of my regiments without a stronger pulsation of the heart.

CHAPTER II.

A SOLDIER'S SCRUPLES OF HONOUR.

One evening, in the summer of 1819, I was walking in the interior of the fortress of Vincennes, with Timoleon d'Arc * * *, like myself a lieutenant in the Guards. We had been, according to custom, to the polygon, attending the exercise in firing *à ricochet*, calmly listening to and relating stories of war, and entering into discussion on the Polytechnic School, on its formation, its utility, its defects, and the men of sallow complexion who had sprung from that geometrical hotbed. Timoleon, too, wore the pale colour of that seminary. Those who knew him will recollect, like me, his regular and rather thin face, his large dark eyes and the arched brows that shaded them, and the serene gravity, so rarely ruffled, of his Spartan countenance. He was deeply intent that evening of our very long conversation on Laplace's System of Probabilities. I remember that he had under

his arm that book, for which we had a high esteem, and with which he often worried himself. Night slowly descended upon us—a beautiful night in August. I looked with gratification at that chapel erected by St. Louis, and at that crown of mossy and half-ruined turrets which then served to adorn Vincennes; the keep rose above them like a monarch amidst his guards. The little crosses of the chapel gleamed among the first stars, at the top of their tall pinnacles. The fresh and agreeable smell of the wood was wafted to us over the ramparts, and there was nothing, to the very greensward of the batteries, but exhaled the breath of a summer evening. We seated ourselves on a great gun of Louis the Fourteenth's, and looked in silence at some young soldiers trying their strength in lifting a bomb by turns at arm's length, while others were slowly going off and crossing the drawbridge by twos or by fours, with all the listlessness of military inoccupation. The courts were full of artillery-waggons, open and laden with powder, prepared for a review to be held on the following day.

On one side of us, near the door next to the wood, an old adjutant of artillery was opening and shutting, often with evident uneasiness, the

very slight door of a small tower, at once a powder-magazine and arsenal, belonging to the foot artillery, and full of barrels of gunpowder, arms, and munitions of war. He saluted us in passing. He was a man of tall stature, but somewhat bent. His hair was thin and white, his moustaches white and bushy, his face, still ruddy, his look healthy, his countenance open, kind, and happy. He held three large papers in his hand, and was examining long columns of figures.

We asked him why he was busy so late, contrary to his custom. He answered, with the composure and tone of respect which mark the old soldier, that a general inspection was to be held on the morrow, to commence at five in the morning; that he was responsible for the powder, and that he could not help going over his accounts again and again, to make sure that he had not left the slightest occasion for reproach on account of negligence; that he was, therefore, anxious to avail himself of the last glimpse of day-light, as there was a very strict prohibition to go at night into the powder-magazine with a torch, or even with a close lantern; that he was extremely vexed at not having had time to see every thing, as he had some bombs left to examine; and that he should much like to be

able to come back in the night: and he looked with somewhat of impatience at the grenadier who was just then placed as sentry at the door, and whose duty it would be to prevent him from entering.

After giving us these details, he knelt down and looked under the door, to see if there was any powder scattered about. He was afraid lest a spark from the spurs or the tips of the officers' boots might set fire to it on the following day.

"It is not that which gives me most concern," said he, rising, "but my lists;" and he looked at them with regret.

"You are too scrupulous," said Timoleon.

"Ah, lieutenant! when one is in the Guards, one cannot be too scrupulous about one's honour. One of our quarter-masters blew out his brains last Monday, because he had been taken to the police-office. It is my duty to set an example to the inferior officers. Since I have been in the Guards, my superiors have not had a single fault to find with me, and a punishment would make me most miserable."

It is true that those brave soldiers, selected from among the *élite* of the *élite* of the army, would deem themselves dishonoured by the slightest fault.

"Go along," said I, slapping him on the shoulder, "you are all puritans of honour."

He saluted us, and retired towards the barracks in which he lived; and presently, with an innocence of manners peculiar to the honest race of soldiers, he returned, bringing some barley in the hollow of both hands, to a hen, which was rearing a brood of a dozen chickens under the old brass cannon on which we were sitting.

It was certainly the handsomest hen I ever saw in my life. She was quite white, without a single spot, and this brave man, with his clumsy fingers, mutilated at Marengo and Austerlitz, had stuck upon her head a small red tuft, and put round her neck a little silver collar having a plate with his initials attached to it in front. The pretty hen was at once proud and grateful for the distinction. She knew that the sentinels always protected her, and she was afraid of nobody, not even of a little sucking pig and an owl which had a lodging near her under the next cannon. The hen was the pet of the gunners, and would take crumbs of bread and bits of sugar from all of us when we were in uniform, but she had a horror of the civic dress, and, not recognizing us in that

disguise, she took refuge with her family under Louis the Fourteenth's cannon — a magnificent cannon, on which was engraven the everlasting sun with his NEC PLURIBUS IMPAR and the ULTIMA RATIO REGUM. And beneath this cannon dwelt—a hen!

The good Adjutant spoke of her in very high terms. She supplied him and his daughter most liberally with eggs; and he was so fond of her, that he had not had the courage to kill one of her chickens, for fear of grieving her. While he was telling us about her engaging ways, the drums and trumpets together sounded the evening call. The bridges were about to be raised, and the keepers already rattled the chains. We were not on duty, and we left the fortress by the door next to the wood. Timoleon, who had all the while been making angles in the sand with the point of his sword, had risen from the cannon, sorry to leave his triangles as I was to leave the white hen and my Adjutant.

We turned to the left, along the ramparts; and thus passing the turf-mound raised for the Duke d'Enghien over his riddled body and his head smashed with a paving-stone, we proceeded along the fossés, looking at the little

white path which he had followed to reach this spot.

There are two sorts of men who can walk together for five successive hours without opening their lips: these are prisoners and officers. Doomed to be continually in each other's sight, when they are all met, each is alone. We walked on in silence, with our arms behind our backs. I remarked, by the moonlight, that Timoleon kept incessantly turning a letter, first one way and then another: it was a small letter, of oblong form. I knew the shape and the female writer, for I was accustomed to see him muse for a day together over the small, neat, elegant hand. In this manner we reached the village facing the castle; we had ascended the stairs of our little white house; we were just going to part on the landing of our contiguous apartments, without having spoken a word. It was not till then that he, all at once, said to me: "She absolutely insists on my quitting the service: what do you think of it?"

"I think," said I, "that she is beautiful as an angel, because I have seen her; I think that you love her to distraction, because I have seen you just the same for two years past as you are this evening; I think that you have a handsome

fortune, to judge by your horses and your appointments; I think that you have sufficiently established your character to retire, and that in time of peace it is no great sacrifice; but I think one thing more."

"What is that?" said he, with a bitter smile, because he guessed what I meant.

"That she is married," said I, in a graver tone: "you know it better than I, my poor friend."

"It is true," said he; "no prospect."

"And your military duty sometimes serves to make you forget this," I added.

"Perhaps so," he replied; "but it is not probable that my star will change in the army Take notice that never in my life have I done a good thing but it has remained unknown or been misconstrued."

"You might read Laplace every night," said I, "and not find any remedy there for that."

And I shut myself up to write a poem on the man with the iron mask—a poem which I entitled THE PRISON.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE LOVE OF DANGER.

THE seclusion of those men whom some demon or other haunts with the illusions of poetry can never be too complete. Profound silence and thick shade rested on the towers of old Vincennes. The garrison had been a-bed since nine in the evening. All the fires had been extinguished at six by order of the drums. Nought was to be heard save the voices of the sentinels sending forth and repeating one after another their drawling melancholy cry: *Sentinelle, prenez garde à vous!* The daws in the turrets replied in a still sadder tone, and, as if they felt themselves no longer safe there, they flew higher to the top of the keep.

There was now nothing to disturb me, and, for all that, something did disturb me; it was neither noise nor light. I tried to write, but could not. I felt something in my thinking faculty like a flaw in an emerald: it was the

idea that there was one watching near me, and watching without consolation, in the anguish of despair. This made me uncomfortable. I was sure that he wanted to open his heart to me, and I had abruptly declined his confidence, from a desire to give myself up to my favourite ideas. I was now punished for it by the disturbance of those very ideas. They did not fly freely and cheerily; their wings seemed to me to be heavy, wetted perhaps by the secret tear of a forsaken friend.

I rose from my arm-chair. I threw open the window, and inhaled the balmy air of night. A forest smell was wafted to me over the walls, slightly mingled with the faint smell of powder: this reminded me of that volcano upon which three thousand men lived and slept in perfect security. I perceived upon the wall of the fort, separated from the village by a road, forty paces wide at most, a light thrown by the lamp of my young neighbour; his shadow passed and repassed on the wall, and I could see by his epaulettes that he had not even thought of going to bed. It was midnight. I suddenly left my apartment and went into his. He was not at all surprised to see me, and he told me at once that, if he was still up, it was to finish

reading a passage in Xenophon, which strongly interested him. But, as there was not a single open book in his apartment, and he still held the neat little letter in his hand, I was not his dupe, though I affected to believe him.

We went to the window, and, endeavouring to bring by degrees my ideas into contact with his, I said: "I was studying, too; and I was endeavouring to account for that kind of magnet which there is for us in the steel of a sword. It is an irresistible attraction, which retains us in the service in spite of our teeth, and keeps us in continual expectation of some event or of a war; I know not—and I just came to talk to you on the subject—whether it would not be true to say and to write that there is in armies a passion which is peculiar to them, and which gives them life; a passion independent either of the love of glory or of ambition: it is a sort of fight, hand to hand, with Fate; a combat, which is the source of a thousand enjoyments unknown to the rest of mankind, and whose secret triumphs are full of magnificence; it is, in short, the LOVE OF DANGER!"

"It is true," replied Timoleon, and I proceeded.

"But for this, what would support the sailor

upon the ocean! what would cheer him under that listlessness which is felt by a man who sees none but men! He sails; he bids adieu to land, adieu to the smiles of woman, adieu to her love, adieu to the chosen friendships and to the tender charities of life; adieu to old, affectionate parents; adieu to the beauties of Nature, to the fields, to the trees, to the greensward, to the flowers and their fragrance, to the dark rocks, to the melancholy woods, tenanted by silent and savage animals; adieu to great cities, to the perpetual bustle of the arts, to the sublime agitation of all the thoughts in a life of leisure; to the elegant, mysterious, impassioned relations with the world; he bids adieu to every thing, and goes. He meets with three enemies — water, air, and man; and, every moment of his life, he has to combat one or other of them. That magnificent disquietude delivers him from *ennui*. He lives in a perpetual victory: it is a victory merely to cross the sea, and not to be upset and swallowed up; it is a victory to go whithersoever he pleases, and to plunge into the arms of a contrary wind; it is a victory to run before the storm, and to make it follow him like a valet; it is a victory to sleep and to set up his study on board his ship. He lies down, with the

feeling of his royalty, upon the back of Ocean, like St. Jerome upon his lion, and enjoys the solitude to which indeed he is wedded."

"It is grand," said Timoleon, and I observed that he laid the letter upon the table.

"And it is this love of danger which nourishes him, which causes him never to have an idle moment, which makes him feel that he has a struggle to maintain, an end to accomplish. It is the struggle that we continually need; if you were in the field, you would not suffer as you do now."

"Who knows?" said he.

"You are as happy as you can be. You cannot advance another step towards your happiness. An impassable barrier crosses your way."

I heard him murmur: "Too true! — too true!"

"You cannot prevent her having a young husband and a child; and you cannot conquer more liberty than you have: that is your torment."

He pressed my hand. "And to be always lying!" said he .... "Do you think we shall have war?"

"I think nothing of the sort," replied I.

"If I could but know whether she is at the ball to-night! I did certainly forbid her to go."

"But for what you have just said," I replied, "I should not have perceived that it is past twelve o'clock. You have no need of Austerlitz, my friend, you are sufficiently occupied. You can dissemble and *lie* a few years longer. Good night."

CHAPTER IV.

THE FAMILY CONCERT.

As I was retiring, I paused, with my hand upon the lock of his door, listening with surprise to music that was very near, and that came from the castle itself. Heard at the window, it seemed to us to be formed by the voices of two men and one female and a piano. To me it was an agreeable surprise at that hour of the night. I proposed to my comrade to go nearer to listen to it. The little drawbridge, parallel with the large one, and destined to afford a passage to the governor and the officers during part of the night, was still down. We entered the fort, and, sauntering through the courts, were guided by the sound till we were close to some open windows, which I knew to be those of the good old Adjutant of artillery. These large windows were on the ground-floor, and, stopping opposite to them, we could perceive at the farther end of

the apartment the simple family of this honest soldier.

There was at that extremity of the room a small piano of mahogany, with old-fashioned brass ornaments. The Adjutant, aged and simple as he had at first appeared to us, was seated before this piano, and playing a series of chords, with accompaniments and simple modulations, but harmoniously connected together. His eyes were raised to heaven, and he had no music before him; his mouth was half open with delight under his thick and long white moustaches. His daughter, standing on his right, was just going to sing or had just ceased; for she was looking anxiously, with her mouth half open, like his. On his left, a young officer of the light artillery of the Guards, in the severe uniform of that fine corps, had his eyes fixed on the girl, as though he was still listening to her.

Nothing could be more calm than their attitudes, nothing more decorous than their demeanour, nothing more happy than their countenances. The light that fell from above on those three faces showed not the slightest expression of care; and the finger of God had written upon them nothing but kindliness, modesty, and love.

The rubbing of our swords against the wall apprised them that we were there. The Adjutant saw us, and his bald brow reddened with surprise, and, if I mistake not, with satisfaction too. He hastily rose, and, taking up one of the three candlesticks that lighted him, came and opened the door and begged us to sit down. We requested him to continue his family concert, and, without making any excuses, without soliciting indulgence, he said with a noble simplicity to his children: "Where did we leave off?" And the three voices were raised in chorus with a harmony that I cannot express.

Timoleon listened and remained motionless; while I, covering my brow and eyes with my hand, fell a-musing with an emotion which, I cannot tell why, was really sad. What they were singing carried my spirit into the region of tears and of melancholy felicities; and, pursued, perhaps, by the annoying idea of my evening occupation, I changed the shifting modulations of the voices into shifting images. What they sang was one of those Scotch choruses, one of those ancient melodies of the bards, which is still sung by the sonorous echo of the Orkneys.

For me this melancholy chorus rose slowly,

and suddenly evaporated, like the mists of Ossian's mountains — those mists which gather over the feathery foam of the torrents of Arven, gradually thicken, and seem to be swollen and increased, as they rise, by an innumerable host of phantoms, whirled and twisted by the winds. These are warriors, with the helmet still upon their heads, who are incessantly musing, and whose tears and blood fall drop by drop into the black waters of the rocks; they are pale beauties, whose long hair streams behind like the tail of a distant comet: they pass swiftly by, and their feet, shrouded in the vapoury folds of their white robes, vanish; they have no wings, and yet they fly. They fly, holding harps in their hands; they fly with downcast eyes, and mouth half-open with innocence; they utter a cry as they pass, and are lost, as they rise, in the mild light of the moon which calls them. They are aërial ships, which seem to run against dark shores, and to plunge into thick billows; the mountains bow their crests to mourn them, and the black dogs raise their deformed heads and howl long and loud, looking at the disk which trembles in the sky, while the sea shakes the white pillars of the Orkneys, which are ranged like the pipes of an immense organ, and

fling over the ocean a stunning harmony, that is a thousand times repeated in the cavern in which the waves are pent up.

The music was thus transformed into sombre images in my soul, still very young, open to all sympathies, and, as it were, enamoured of fictitious sorrows.

It was, however, but falling in with the idea of him who had invented these sad and powerful songs, to feel them in that manner. The happy family itself experienced the strong emotion which it communicated, and a profound vibration sometimes made the three voices tremble.

The music ceased, and a long silence succeeded. The damsel, as if fatigued, had leant upon her father's shoulder; she was tall, slight, and somewhat bent, as if from weakness; she looked as if she had grown too fast, and her lungs seemed to be rather affected in consequence. She kissed her father's bald, broad, wrinkled brow, while she permitted the young sub-officer to take her hand and press it to his lips.

I took care, out of self-love, not to utter my secret thoughts; I contented myself with coolly saying:—"May Heaven grant long life and all sorts of blessings to those who have the gift of

translating music literally! I cannot marvel enough at a man who finds in one symphony the fault of being too Cartesian, and in another that of leaning towards the system of Spinosa; who cries up the pantheism of a trio, and the utility of an overture to the improvement of the condition of the labouring classes. If I had the happiness to know how an additional B flat can render a quartett of flute and bassoons more a partisan of the Directory than of the Consulate and of the Empire, I would give up talking, I would do nothing but sing; I would trample upon words and phrases, which are fit at most for only about a hundred departments, while I should have the felicity of proclaiming my ideas in the clearest manner to the whole world with my seven notes. But, not possessing that science, my musical conversation would be so limited that the only course for me to take is to express to you, in homely language, the gratification which I derive more especially from the sight of you and from that evident union of simplicity and goodness of heart which prevails in your family. In fact, that which most delights me in your little concert is the pleasure that you take in it yourselves: your souls seem to me more harmonious than the most exquisite

music that Heaven ever heard ascending to it from our wretched and ever-groaning earth."

I gave my hand, with emotion, to this good father, and he pressed it with the expression of cordial acknowledgment. He was but an old soldier, yet he had in his language and manners a certain tincture of the old *bon ton* of good society. This, the history which he afterwards gave me of his life, enabled me to account for.

"You see, lieutenant," said he to me, "the life that we lead here. We go to rest singing, my daughter, myself, and my future son-in-law." At the same time he cast upon the young people a look of affection beaming with happiness. "Here," he added, with a more serious look, pointing to a miniature, "is my daughter's mother."

We looked at the plastered and whitewashed wall of the humble apartment, and there we actually saw the most graceful and lovely peasant-girl to whom Greuze ever gave large blue eyes and cherry lips.

"It was a very great lady that formerly had the goodness to paint that portrait," said the Adjutant, "and a curious history it is, that of my poor dear wife's dowry."

And, on our first request that he would relate the history of his marriage, he thus commenced over three glasses of cider, which he took care previously and ceremoniously to offer us.

CHAPTER V.

THE CHILDREN OF MONTREUIL AND THE STONE MASON.

You must know, lieutenant, that I was brought up at Montreuil by Monsieur le Curé of Montreuil himself. He had taught me a few notes of music in the happiest time of my life, the time when I was a singing boy, had plump red cheeks, which every body patted as they passed, a clear voice, light powdered hair, a round frock, and wooden shoes. I do not often look at myself, but I don't imagine that I have now much resemblance to that picture. Such, however, I was then; and I never liked to leave a sort of harpsichord, a crazy instrument, and sadly out of tune, which the old Curé had in his house. I tuned it as well as a tolerably good ear enabled me; and the good Father, who had formerly gained some reputation at Notre Dame for singing and teaching church music, made me learn my gamut.

When he was satisfied with me, he used to pinch my cheeks till they turned black, and say to me: "I'll tell thee what, Mathurin, thou art but the child of peasants, but if thou learnest thy catechism and thy gamut properly, and wilt give up playing with that rusty gun in the kitchen, we may make a music-master of thee, after all. Go thy ways." This gave me courage, and I used to thump away with both fists at the poor harpsichord, almost all the keys of which were mute.

There were hours when I had permission to walk and run about; but my favourite recreation was to go and sit down at the farther end of the park of Montreuil, and eat my piece of bread with the masons and workmen, who were building by command of the queen a little music pavilion, on the avenue to Versailles, about a hundred paces from the barrier.

It was a charming spot, which you may see on the right of the Versailles road, just as you get there. Quite at the extremity of the park of Montreuil, in the middle of a lawn surrounded with tall trees, if you perceive a pavilion that looks like a mosque or a *bonbonnière*, that is what I went to see them building.

I took with me by the hand a little girl of my

own age, called Pierrette, whom Monsieur le Curé taught to sing too, because she had a pretty voice. She used to carry with her a large tart that was given to her by her mother, who was the Curé's housekeeper, and we went to look at the men at work on the building erecting for the Queen, who meant to give it to Madame.

At this time, Pierrette and I were about thirteen. She was already so handsome that people would stop by the way to pay her compliments, and I have even seen fine ladies alight from their carriages to talk to her and to kiss her.

When she had on a red frock, pulled up through the pocket-holes, and made to sit tight round the waist, it was easy to see how handsome she was likely to be some day. She thought nothing about that herself, and she was as fond of me as if I had been her brother.

From our earliest childhood, we always held each other by the hand when we went abroad, and such was the force of this habit that in all my life I never gave her my arm. Our custom of going to look at the workmen brought us acquainted with a young stone-mason, older than ourselves by eight or ten years. He made us sit down on a block or on the ground beside

him, and when he had a great stone to saw, Pierrette threw water on the saw, and I laid hold of it at the other end to help him; and so we came to be the best friends in the world. He was a lad of a mild, quiet disposition, sometimes disposed to mirth, but not often. He had made a little song upon the stones which he cut, and on their being harder than Pierrette's heart; and he played off such whimsical conceits on the words Pierre (stone), and Pierrette, as made us all three laugh heartily.

He was a tall youth, still growing, pale and awkward, with long arms and legs, and sometimes he seemed to be thinking of something else than what he was doing. He liked his trade, he said, because he could earn his living at it, while thinking of other things till sunset. His father, an architect, had so thoroughly ruined himself, I know not how, that the son took up his business from the beginning, and submitted very quietly to his lot. When he was cutting a great block, or sawing it lengthwise, he always began a little song containing a complete story, which he put together as he went on, in twenty or thirty stanzas, more or less.

Sometimes he told me to walk before him with Pierrette, and he made us sing together,

teaching us to sing in parts; then he amused himself by making me kneel before Pierrette, with my hand on my heart; and he composed the words of a little scene, which he made us repeat after him. But, for all this, he understood his business well, and he was not at it a year before he set up for master-mason. With his square and his mallet, he had to support his poor mother and his two little brothers, who sometimes went with us to see him work. When he saw all his little folks round him, the sight gave him courage and spirits. We called him Michel, but, to confess the truth to you at once, his proper name was Michel Jean Sedaine.

"Alas!" said I, "there is a poet in his right place!"

The young female and the sub-officer looked at one another, as if vexed at my having interrupted their good father; but the worthy Adjutant, after pulling up first on one side and then on the other the black cravat that he wore folded over a white one, and tied in the military fashion, proceeded as follows,

CHAPTER VI.

THE LADY IN PINK.

THERE is nothing of which I am more firmly convinced, said he, turning towards his daughter, than the care which Providence has been pleased to take to compose my life in the way that it has been composed. Amidst the numberless storms that have shaken it, I can declare, in the face of the whole world, that I have never failed to trust in God, and to expect help from him, after I have done all in my power to help myself. Hence, I tell you, when walking upon the agitated waves, I have not deserved to be called *man of little faith*, as the Apostle was; for when my feet sank, my eyes were lifted up, and I was relieved.

Here I looked at Timoleon. "What a lesson for us!" I whispered. He proceeded.

Monsieur le Curé of Montreuil was very fond of me. He treated me with such parental

kindness that I entirely forgot, though he was so frequently telling me, that I was the child of poor peasants, who had been carried off nearly at the same time by the small-pox, and whom I never had so much as seen. At sixteen, I was wild and stupid; but I had learned a little Latin, a good deal of music, and was found tolerably clever at all kinds of gardening work. My life passed on very happily, because Pierrette was always there, and I kept my eyes constantly on her while I was at work, but yet without saying a great deal to her.

One day, I was cutting boughs from one of the beeches in the park, and tying them up into a small faggot, when Pierrette said to me: "Oh, Mathurin, I am so frightened! Look at those two fine ladies coming towards us from the end of the alley. What shall we do?"

I looked, and sure enough there were two young ladies walking at a great rate over the dry leaves, without holding each other by the arm. One of them was rather taller than the other, and wore a pink silk dress. Her walk was almost a run, while the other, though accompanying her, was a little behind. From

instinct, I was as much frightened as Pierrette, poor young clown as I was, and I said to her: "Let us run away!"

But, pooh! we had not time; and I was still worse frightened to see the lady in the pink dress make a sign to Pierrette, who turned quite red and durst not stir, but laid hold of my hand quick, to keep up her courage. I, for my part, pulled off my cap, and clapped my back against the tree, quite aghast.

When the lady in pink had reached us, she went right up to Pierrette, and without ceremony chucked her under the chin, holding up her face to the other lady, saying: "Did I not tell you so, eigh! why it is precisely my milk-maid's costume for Thursday! .... What a pretty girl! .... My dear, you will give all your clothes, such as these, to the people whom I shall send for them, will you not? You shall have mine in exchange."

"Oh, madam!" said Pierrette, starting back.

The other young lady then began to smile with a look of such touching sweetness, tenderness, and melancholy, that I shall never forget it. She stepped up, and, gently taking Pierrette by the bare arm, she told her to come

nearer, and said that it was the duty of every body to do what that lady desired.

"Don't make the least change in thy dress, my pretty girl," said the lady in pink, shaking at her a little gold-headed cane which she held in her hand. "There is a strapping lad who shall be a soldier, and I will have you married."

She was so handsome that I well remember the inconceivable temptation I felt to fall on my knees. You will laugh at this, as I have often inwardly laughed at it myself; but had you seen her you would comprehend what I mean. She looked just like a good, kind fairy.

She spoke in a brisk, lively manner, and, giving Pierrette a little pat on the cheek, she left us there both thunder-struck, both stupified, and not knowing what to do. We watched the two ladies follow the alley leading to Montreuil, till we lost sight of them behind the little wood in the park.

We then looked at one another, and, still holding each other by the hand, we returned to Monsieur le Curé's. We said nothing, but we were in high glee. Pierrette was quite red, while I hung down my head. He asked us what

was the matter. I said to him very seriously: "Monsieur le Curé, I will be a soldier."

He was well nigh upset—he who had taught me the gamut.

"What! my dear child," said he, "dost thou wish to leave me? Ah! good God! Pierrette, what has happened to him that he wants to be a soldier? Dost thou no longer love me, Mathurin? Dost thou no longer love Pierrette either? Say, what have we done to thee? and why wouldst thou throw away the good education that I have given thee? That would be time wasted, most assuredly. Answer me, then, good-for-nothing boy!" added he, shaking me by the arm.

I scratched my head, and, still looking down at my wooden shoes, I merely said: "I will be a soldier."

Pierrette's mother brought Monsieur le Curé a large tumbler of cold water, because he had turned quite red, and she burst out a-crying. Pierrette cried too, and durst not say any thing; but she was not angry with me, because she well knew that, if I wanted to go, it was only that I might marry her.

At that moment, two tall powdered footmen entered with a waiting woman, who looked like

a great lady, and inquired if the girl had got the things ready, as the Queen and the Princess de Lamballe had desired her to do.

The poor Curé rose so agitated that he could not keep on his legs for a minute, and Pierrette and her mother trembled so violently that they durst not open a little box, sent to them in exchange for Pierrette's dress, and they went to look up the things with much the same feelings as a man goes to be shot.

When left alone with me, the Curé asked me what had passed, and I told him nearly as I have told you, but somewhat more briefly.

"And is it for this that thou wouldst leave me, my child?" said he, taking both my hands. "But consider that if the greatest lady in Europe has talked thus to a poor peasant boy like thee, it was only in jest, and that she will never think more of what she has said to thee. If any one were to tell her that thou hast taken this for an order or for a horoscope, she would say that thou art a stupid blockhead, and that thou mayst be a gardener all thy life, for aught she cares. Whatever thou earnest by gardening, whatever thou mayst earn by teaching vocal music, shall be thine, my friend; whereas, what thou wilt earn in a regiment will not belong to

thee, and thou wilt have a thousand occasions to spend it in pleasures forbidden by morality and religion; thou wilt lose all the virtuous principles that I have instilled into thee, and thou wilt force me to be ashamed of thee. Thou wilt return—if thou dost ever return—with a different character from that which thou receivedst at thy birth. Thou wast gentle, modest, docile; thou wilt be rough, impudent, and dissolute. Little Pierrette will certainly not submit to be the wife of a rake, and her mother will not let her if she would; and I, what could I do for thee, if thou utterly *forgettest* Providence? Thou wilt forget Providence, seest thou? To this pass, I assure thee, thou wilt come."

Still I remained with my eyes fixed on my shoes, my brows knitted, my lip pouting. Scratching my head, I once more said: "I don't care—I will be a soldier."

The good Curé's patience was exhausted, and, opening the door quite wide, he pointed to the high road with evident sorrow. I understood the pantomime, and departed. Had I been in his place, I should assuredly have done the same. But, I think so now; then I did not think at all. I stuck my cotton cap over my right ear, I

pulled up the collar of my smock-frock, I took my stick, and away I went straight to a little pot-house, in the avenue to Versailles, without bidding adieu to a creature.

CHAPTER VII.

THE FIRST RANK POSITION.

In this little public-house I found three brave fellows in gold-laced hats, white uniform turned up with pink, blackened moustaches, hair all bepowdered like hoar-frost, and whose tongues went as fast as an auctioneer's. These three brave fellows were an honest recruiting party. They told me that I had nothing to do but to sit down and dine with them to have a correct idea of the perfect happiness that was invariably enjoyed in the Royal Auvergne. They made me eat along with them venison, chicken, and partridge, and drink claret and champagne, and excellent coffee; they swore to me upon their honour, that, in the Royal Auvergne, I should never have any other. I found in the sequel that they told me the truth.

They swore roundly too — for with them almost every word was an oath—that in the Royal Auvergne every man could do just what

he pleased; that the common soldiers belonging to it were incomparably better off than the captains of other regiments; that they enjoyed the most agreeable society not only as to men, but also that of fine ladies; that they had plenty of music, and above all that any one who could play on the piano was sure to be made much of. This last circumstance decided me.

On the following day, then, I had the honour to be a soldier in the Royal Auvergne. It was a very fine regiment, it is true, but I saw neither Pierrette nor Monsieur le Curé. I asked for a chicken for dinner, and they gave me in its stead that savoury medley of potatoes, mutton, and bread, which is commonly called an Irish stew. They made me learn the position of the soldier without arms to such a degree of perfection that I afterwards served for the model to the artist who made the drawings for the plates to the ordinance of 1791, an ordinance which, you know, lieutenant, is a master-piece of precision. I was taught the manual and platoon exercise, so as to be able to execute charges in twelve different sorts of time as perfectly as the stiffest of the corporals of that King of Prussia, whom the old soldiers still remembered with the affection of men that are fond of those from

whom they have received a sound drubbing They even did me the honour to promise me that, if I behaved well, I should be admitted by and by into the first grenadier company. I soon had a powdered tail that hung down nobly enough over my white vest; but I saw nothing of Pierrette, or of her mother, or of Monsieur le Curé; and, as for music, I never touched an instrument.

One fine day, when I was on duty at these very barracks where we now are, because I had made three blunders in the exercise, I was placed in the position of the first rank for firing, one knee on the pavement, facing a magnificent broiling sun, which I was forced to take aim at, absolutely motionless, till very weariness made my arms sink, and I was encouraged to support my piece by the presence of an honest corporal, who, from time to time, raised my bayonet with the butt-end of his piece when it sank too low: this was a little punishment invented by M. de Saint Germain.

I had been twenty minutes striving to attain the highest possible degree of petrifaction in this attitude, when I saw at the end of my piece the kind, good-humoured face of my old friend Michel, the stone-cutter.

"Thou art come just at the right time, my friend," said I to him; "thou wouldst do me a great service, by holding thy cane for a moment under my bayonet, if thou canst do it without being noticed. It would relieve my arms a little, and thy cane would be no worse for it."

"Ah, my friend Mathurin," said he, "thou art severely punished for leaving Montreuil! Thou hast now neither the advice nor the lessons of the good Curé, and thou wilt entirely forget the music of which thou wert so fond, and which that of the parade will certainly not make amends for."

"I don't care," said I, raising the end of my piece, and disengaging it from his cane, out of pride; "I don't care; every one has his whim."

"Thou wilt never more train the espaliers and raise beautiful peaches at Montreuil along with thy Pierrette, who is almost as ruddy as they, and whose lip is covered with a down as soft as their's."

"I don't care," I repeated; "it is my whim."

"Thou wilt have to pass a long time on thy knees, firing at nothing, with a wooden flint, before thou art merely corporal."

"I don't care," said I again; "if my promotion is slow, at any rate I am certain to be promoted. He is sure to have luck who can wait long enough for it, as they say; and when I am sergeant, I shall be somebody, and then I'll marry Pierrette. A sergeant is a gentleman, let me tell you."

Michel sighed. "Ah, Mathurin, Mathurin!" said he, "thou art a simpleton, and thou hast too much pride and ambition, my friend. Shouldst thou not like to be released, if somebody would pay for a substitute for thee, and to come and marry thy little Pierrette?"

"Michel, Michel," said I, "thou art sadly spoiled in the world. I know not what thou canst be at; for thy appearance tells me that thou art not a mason now, since thou wearest a fine black coat instead of a working jacket: but thou wouldst not have talked thus to me at the time when thou wert continually repeating, 'Every man must carve out his own lot.' .... For my part, I am determined not to marry her with any other person's money, and I am carving out my own lot, as thou seest .... Besides, it was the Queen who put this into my head, and what the Queen judges right to be done must be right. She said herself: 'He shall be a soldier,

and I will have you married,' and not, 'He shall come back after he has been a soldier.'"

"But," said Michel, "if it should so happen that the Queen were pleased to give you wherewithal to marry, would you take it?"

"No, Michel, I would not take her money, if, which is not possible, she were to offer it."

"And if Pierrette were to earn her dowry herself?" he rejoined.

"Why, then, Michel, I would marry her immediately," said I.

The good fellow seemed much affected.

"Well," he replied, "I will tell the Queen that."

"Art thou mad?" said I to him; "or perhaps thou belongest to the household?"

"Neither the one nor the other, Mathurin, though I have given up stone-cutting."

"What dost thou cut, then?" I asked.

"Why, I cut paper, pens—I cut out plays."

"Pshaw!" said I, "is it possible?"

"Yes, my lad, I write little plays, that are very simple and easy to understand. You shall see them by and by."

"In fact," said Timoleon, interrupting the Adjutant, "honest Sedaine's works are not

constructed upon very difficult questions; there you find no synthesis on the finite and the infinite, on final causes, on the association of ideas, on personal identity; there is no putting to death of kings and queens by poison or the scaffold; there you see no affectation of sonorous names, but such as *Blaise, L'Agneau perdu, Le Deserteur,* or *Le Jardinier et son Seigneur, La Gageure imprevue;* the *dramatis personæ* are simple creatures, who talk the language of truth and nature, who are *philosophers without knowing it,* like Sedaine himself, a writer whom I rate far higher than the public has done."

I made no reply.

The Adjutant resumed.

"Ah! so much the better," said I. "I like to see you at that kind of work just as well as at stone-cutting."

"Nay," said he, "what I then built was more solid than what I am now constructing. That did not go out of fashion, and would remain standing a longer time. But, if it fell, it was liable to crush somebody; whereas this that I am about now, when it falls, neither hurts nor harms any one."

"No matter, I am very glad of it," said I.

Or rather, I would have said; for the corporal came and gave my friend Michel's cane such a furious blow with the butt-end of his piece, that he sent it down yonder, look you, yonder, close to the powder-magazine. At the same time, he ordered the sentry who had suffered a civilian to enter to be put under arrest for six days.

Sedaine was aware that it was high time for him to be gone. He quietly picked up his cane, and, as he went off towards the side next the wood, he called out to me: "I assure thee, Mathurin, that I will tell all this to the Queen."

CHAPTER VIII.

A SITTING.

My little Pierrette was a pretty girl, of a decided character, but calm and firm. She was not very easily disconcerted, and, ever since she had talked to the Queen, it was a difficult matter to make her learn her lessons; she had no hesitation to tell Monsieur le Curé and her mother that she meant to be married to Mathurin, and she would get up at night to make things for the wedding, just as if I had not been turned out of doors for a long time, if not for my whole life.

One day, it was Easter Monday — poor Pierrette always remembered that, and she often told me the story — one day, then, as she was sitting at Monsieur le Curé's door, working and singing as if nothing was the matter, she saw a beautiful carriage coming at a great rate along the avenue. It was drawn by six horses, two of which were ridden by two little postilions,

powdered, and in pink jackets, very handsome, and so small that at a distance nothing could be seen of them but their great jack-boots. They had large nosegays at their bosoms; and the horses, too, had large nosegays at their ears.

Sure enough, the outrider, who scampered before the horses, stopped right before Monsieur le Curé's door; where, a moment afterwards, the carriage too thought fit to draw up, and the door was thrown wide open. There was nobody in it. Pierrette was staring at it with all her eyes, when the outrider, taking off his hat very politely, requested her to have the goodness to step into the carriage.

Do you imagine that Pierrette made any ceremony? Not she, indeed; she had too much good sense for that. She merely took off her wooden shoes, which she left on the step at the door, put on her leather shoes with silver buckles, neatly folded up her work, and got into the carriage, leaning upon the arm of the footman, as if she had never done any thing else in her life; because, since she had changed dresses with the Queen, she was afraid of nothing.

She often told me, though, that she got two great frights in the carriage: the first, because it went so quick that the trees in the avenue of

Montreuil seemed to run like mad one after the other; and the second, because she thought, by sitting on the white cushions in the carriage, her blue and yellow petticoat would leave marks of its colours upon them. She therefore pulled it through her pocket-holes, and kept just on the edge of the cushion, feeling no sort of anxiety about what was to happen, and rightly guessing that, under such circumstances, it is best to do what one is desired frankly and without hesitation.

Agreeably to this just feeling of her situation, imparted by a happy, kindly disposition, inclining in every thing to what was right and true, she cheerfully took the arm of the outrider, and suffered him to conduct her to Trianon, into the gilded apartments; where, however, she was careful to step on her toes, to spare the floors of citron and India woods, which she was afraid of scratching with the nails.

When she reached the last apartment, she heard a joyous laugh of two very sweet voices, which daunted her a little, and set her heart a-throbbing with violence; but, on entering, she recovered herself immediately: it was only her friend, the Queen. Madame de Lamballe was with her, but seated in the embrasure of a

window, and having the materials for miniature painting before her. On the green cloth that covered her table lay a piece of ivory, ready prepared; close to the ivory lay brushes, and near the brushes stood a glass of water.

"Ah, there she is!" said the Queen, with a holyday look; and she ran and laid hold of both her hands.

"What a colour she has! and how handsome she is! What a pretty model she will make for you! Come, Madame de Lamballe, do your best .... Sit down here, my dear."

And the beautiful Marie Antoinette made her sit down in a chair. Pierrette was quite thunderstruck, and her chair was so high that her little legs did not reach the floor, but dangled to and fro.

"Only see how well she behaves!" continued the Queen: "she does not need telling twice to do what you wish; I would lay a wager that she is clever. Sit upright, my dear, and mind what I am going to say. Two gentlemen will be here presently. Whether thou knowest them or not, that does not signify, and must not make any difference to thee. Thou wilt do all that they tell thee to do. I know that thou canst sing, so thou wilt sing. When they tell thee to come in,

to go out, to walk this way or that, thou wilt come in, go out, walk to and fro, exactly as they bid thee; dost thou comprehend? All this will be for thy good. This lady and I will help to teach thee something that I thoroughly understand; and, for our pains, we will only ask thee to sit an hour every day to her — that will not be too hard for thee, will it?"

Pierrette made no reply but by changing colour at every word; but she was so pleased that she would have liked to kiss the dear Queen, as though she had been her playfellow.

While she was thus sitting, with her eyes turned towards the door, she saw two men come in; one was fat, and the other tall. The moment she saw the tall one, she could not help crying out, "Why, that is . . . ." but she bit her finger to stop her mouth.

"Well, what think you of her, gentlemen?" said the Queen. "Am I wrong?"

"Is it not Rose herself?" said Sedaine.

"A single note, Madam," said the lusty gentleman, "and I shall know whether it is Monsigny's Rose as well as Sedaine's."

"Come, my dear, repeat these notes," added Gretry, singing *ut*, *ré*, *mi*, *fa*, *sol*.

Pierrette repeated them.

"She has a divine voice, Madam," said he.

The Queen clapped her hands and leaped for joy.

"She will earn her dowry!" said she.

CHAPTER IX.

A CAPITAL HOUSE.

Here the honest Adjutant sipped a little of his cider, inviting us to follow his example, and, having wiped his white moustaches with a red handkerchief, and turned it for a moment in his clumsy fingers, he thus proceeded.

If I knew, lieutenant, how to contrive surprizes so as they are contrived in books, and to make my auditors wait for the end of a story, while holding the sweetmeat up high, then letting them touch it with the tip of their lips, then holding it up again, and at last popping the whole of it into their mouths, I would devise some new method of telling you the remainder of this: but, as I am only a plain man, and have gone straight-forward all my life, I shall say that, from the day my poor friend Michel came to see me here at Vincennes, and found me in the first rank position, I began to fall away in a

ridiculous manner, because I never heard a word about our little family at Montreuil, and I was ready to think that Pierrette had entirely forgotten me. The regiment of Auvergne had been at Orleans for three months, and I began to feel home-sick. I was visibly turning yellow, and I could scarcely carry my musket. My comrades began to show a great contempt for me, as is always the case here, you know, when one is ill.

There were some who despised me because they believed me to be very ill, others because they maintained that I only shammed illness; and in t e latter case, I had no alternative but to die to prove that I told the truth—not being able to get well at once, nor being so ill as to be forced to keep my bed, a most unpleasant situation.

One day, an officer of my company came to me and said, "Mathurin, thou canst read, come and read this."

So he took me to the Place de Jeanne d'Arc, a place that is dear to me, and I read a large posting-bill of the theatre, which was to this effect:

"By Order

"Next Monday, extraordinary representation of Irene, a new play by M. de Voltaire, and of Rose and Colas,

by M. SEDAINE, music by M. de Monsigny, for the benefit of Mademoiselle Colombe, a celebrated singer of the Italian Comedy, who will appear in the second piece. HER MAJESTY THE QUEEN has been graciously pleased to promise that she would honour the performance with her presence."

"Well, captain," said I, "how can that concern me?"

"Thou art a good fellow," said he, "thou art a comely lad; I will have thee powdered and frizzed to make thee look genteel, and thou shalt be placed at the door of the Queen's box."

What he said was done. The hour for the play having arrived, there was I in the corridor, in the gala dress of the Auvergne regiment, on a blue carpet, among wreaths of flowers, hung every where in festoons, and lilies placed upon every step of the staircase of the theatre. The manager ran bustling about first one way and then another, with a joyous look. He was a short, thick-set, ruddy-faced man, dressed in a sky-blue coat, with an enormous frill. He was flying about in all directions, and incessantly running to the window, saying: "That is the livery of Madame the Duchess de Montmorency; this is Monsieur the Duke de Lauzun's running footman; Monsieur the Prince de Guéménée

has just arrived; M. de Lambesc is coming next. Have you seen?—do you know?—how kind the Queen is! how very kind!"

And so he hurried backward and forward, looking for Gretry, and he met him full-butt in the corridor, exactly facing me.

"Tell me, Monsieur Gretry, my dear Monsieur Gretry, tell me, I beseech you, if it be not possible for me to speak to this celebrated singer whom you have brought. To be sure, it is not right for an ignorant and illiterate man like me to raise the slightest doubt of her talents; but still I should like to learn from you if there is not reason to apprehend that the Queen may be dissatisfied."

"Hey-day," replied Gretry, with a sort of jeering look, "it is difficult for me to give you an answer on that subject, my dear sir; but one thing I can assure you, and that is that you will not see her. An actress like that, sir, is a spoiled child. But you shall see her when she comes upon the stage. Besides, should she even prove not to be Mademoiselle Colombe, what difference does that make to you?"

"What, sir," replied he, swelling his cheeks, "I, the manager of the Orleans theatre, not have a right . . . ."

"No right whatever, my worthy manager," said Gretry. "Why, how is it possible that you should be for a moment doubtful of talents, which Sedaine and I have answered for?" continued he with a more serious look.

I was much pleased to hear that name mentioned with authority, and I listened with more attention. The manager, like a man who knows his business, was anxious to profit by the circumstance.

"But am I then to be considered as nobody?" said he. "What do I look like? I have lent my theatre with infinite pleasure, too happy to see the illustrious princess, who . . . ."

"By the by," said Gretry, "you know that I am commissioned to inform you that the Queen will send you to-night a sum equal to half the total receipts."

The manager, stepping back, made a very low bow, with a look which proved what pleasure that intimation gave him.

"Nay, nay, sir, I say nothing about that, notwithstanding the respect with which I shall receive this favour: but you have not held out a hope to me of some production of your genius and . . . ."

"You know there has been some talk about

you for manager of the Italian Comedy in Paris?"

"No sure, M. Gretry!"

"At court, people talk of scarcely any thing but your abilities; every body there has the highest regard for you, and it is on this account that the Queen wished to see your theatre. A manager is the soul, the vivifying principle of every thing: from him emanates the genius of authors, composers, actors, scene-painters, lamp-lighters, and sweepers; this the Queen is well aware of. You have trebled the price of places, I hope?"

"Better than that, Monsieur Gretry — none to be had under a louis. I could not be so deficient in respect to the court, as to let them go for less."

At this moment, the whole house rang with the loud tramp of horses and vehement shouts of joy, and the Queen came in so quick that I had scarcely time to present arms, any more than the sentinel placed opposite to me. Fine perfumed gentlemen followed her, and a young lady, whom I knew to be the same that had accompanied her to Montreuil.

The play began immediately. Le Kain and five other actors of the Comedie Française had

come to perform the tragedy of Irene, and I perceived that this tragedy was still going on, because the Queen talked and laughed the whole time that it lasted. The spectators did not applaud, out of respect for her, as it is still customary, I believe, at court. But when the comic opera began, she said not a word, and not a creature breathed in her box.

All at once I heard a loud female voice, which rose from the stage and thrilled my very vitals. I trembled, and was obliged to support myself with my firelock. There was but one voice like that in the world, a voice coming from the heart, and vibrating in the heart like a harp—a voice of passion.

Clapping my ear to the door, I listened, and, through the gauze curtain of the little window to the box, I got a glimpse of the actors and of the piece that they were playing. There was a young girl who sang:

A little ash-gray bird there was,
No bigger than a mouse,
And she, to lodge her little ones,
Made them a tiny house.

And she said to her lover:

Love me, love me, my pretty little king.

And as he sat on the window, she was afraid lest

her father, who was asleep, should wake up and see Colas, and she changed the burden of her song, and said:

Ah! hold up your legs that they may not be seen

An extraordinary shiver seized every limb of me when I saw how exactly this Rose was like Pierrette: it was her height, her very dress, her red and blue frock, her white petticoat, her calm and natural look, her well turned leg, her red and blue stockings, and her little shoes with silver buckles.

"Good God!" said I, "how clever these actresses must be to take thus all at once the look of others! There is that famous Mademoiselle Colombe, who lives in a grand house, who keeps several servants, who goes about in Paris dressed like a duchess, and who has travelled post to Orleans; and for all that she is the very picture of Pierrette; but it is not Pierrette, that one may see at a single glance. My poor Pierrette did not sing so well, though she had quite as good a voice."

Still I could not forbear looking through the glass, and there I stood till the door was suddenly thrown back in my face. The Queen was too warm, and had desired it to be opened. I heard her voice; she spoke fast and loud.

"I am quite delighted; the King will be highly amused at our adventure. Let the first gentleman of the bed-chamber tell Mademoiselle Colombe that she shall not repent having allowed me to make use of her name . . . . Oh! how this amuses me!"

"My dear princess," said she to Madame de Lamballe, "we have caught all the world here. And all of them are doing a good action without being aware of it. And see, the honest people of the good city of Orleans are enchanted with the great singer, and the whole court would fain applaud. Yes, yes, let us applaud."

At the same time, she gave the signal for applause, and all the spectators, having their hands untied, did not suffer a word to be uttered by Rose without applauding with a vehemence that seemed ready to bring the house down about their ears. The charming Queen was transported.

"Here," said she to M. de Biron, "are three thousand enamoured swains; it is not with me that they are in love this time, but with Rose."

The piece ended, and the ladies showered down their bouquets upon Rose.

"And the real lover, where is he then?" said the Queen to the Baron de Lauzun. He left the

box and made a sign to my captain, who was sauntering about in the corridor.

The trembling seized me again. I felt that something was going to happen to me, without daring to foresee, or to comprehend, or merely to think of it.

My captain made a low obeisance, and talked in an under-tone with M. de Lauzun. The Queen looked at me; I propped myself against the wall, lest I should sink. I heard the sound of feet coming up stairs, and I saw Sedaine, followed by Gretry and the self-important and stupid manager, leading to me Pierrette, the real Pierrette, my own Pierrette, my sister, my wife, my Pierrette of Montreuil!

The manager called out at a distance: "A capital house! not less than eighteen thousand francs!"

The Queen turned round, and, talking from her box, with a look at once full of frank cheerfulness and kindness, she took the hand of Pierrette. "Come, my dear," said she, "there is no other profession by which a girl can earn a dowry in an hour in an innocent way. To-morrow, I will take back my pupil to Monsieur le Curé, who will absolve both of us, I hope. He will certainly forgive thee for having played

a part once in thy life; 'tis the least that an honest woman can do."

She then made an obeisance to me, to me, who was half dead already. What cruelty!

"I hope," said she, "that M. Mathurin will now condescend to accept Pierrette's fortune. I shall add nothing to it; she has earned it all herself."

CHAPTER X.

CONCLUSION OF THE ADJUTANT'S HISTORY.

HERE the good Adjutant rose and took up the portrait, which he made us once more hand from one to the other.

"There she is," said he, "in the very same dress, with that cap, and that handkerchief about her neck; there she is, just as Madame the Princess de Lamballe was pleased to paint her.—'Tis thy mother," said he, to the fair girl who stood near him, at the same time seating her on his knee; "she never acted the play again, though," added he; "for she never knew any other part but that in *Rose and Colas*, taught her by the Queen."

He was affected. His old white moustaches trembled a little, and a tear hung upon them.

"Here is a girl," he resumed, "who killed her poor mother in bringing her into the world: one must be very fond of her to forgive her for it. But, to be sure, every thing is not given to

us at once. This would apparently have been too much for me, since Providence was not pleased to grant it. I have since rolled with the cannon of the Republic and of the Empire; and I can say, that, from Marengo to the Moscowa, I have seen capital affairs, but I never passed a happier day in my life than the one of which I have given you an account. That on which I entered into the Royal Guard was also one of the best. Ah! with what joy I mounted once more the white cockade which I had worn in the Royal Auvergne! .... and then, lieutenant, I am very anxious to do my duty, as you have seen. I verily believe that I should die with shame, if, to-morrow, at the inspection, there should be found a deficiency of a single barrel; and I do think, that, at the last exercises, one was taken for the cartridges of the infantry. I should almost be tempted to go and see, were we not forbidden to enter the place with a light."

We begged him to make himself easy and to stay with his children, who dissuaded him from his intention; and, while finishing his glass, he related to us a few other indifferent circumstances of his life. He had never obtained promotion, because he had been too much attached

to his regiment, and too fond of the *corps d'élite.* Gunner in the consular guard, sergeant in the imperial guard, had always appeared to him higher grades than officer in the line. I have seen many such fixtures. For the rest, all the distinctions that a soldier can have, he had: *fusil d'honneur*, with silver ferules to the ramrod, cross of honour with a pension, and especially noble certificate of service, in which the column specifying the occasions on which he had distinguished himself was quite full. About that, however, he said not a word.

It was two in the morning. We broke up the party by rising and cordially shaking hands with this excellent man, and we left him happy in the emotions of his life, which his story had renewed in his honest and affectionate soul.

"How often," said I, "does this old soldier, with his resignation, surpass us, young officers, with our mad ambition!" This furnished us with matter for reflection.

"Yes, I really believe," continued I, as we crossed the little bridge, which was raised after us — "I really believe that in these times there is nothing more pure than the soul of such a soldier, scrupulous in regard to his honour, and deeming it sullied by the slightest spot of indis-

cipline or negligence; without ambition, without vanity, without luxury, ever a slave and ever proud and contented with his Servitude."

"And believing that Providence keeps an eye upon him!" said Timoleon, with an air which showed how powerfully he was struck by this sentiment, and leaving me to retire to his own apartment.

CHAPTER XI.

THE ALARM.

I HAD been asleep about an hour: it was four in the morning, and the 17th of August; I shall never forget that day! Suddenly, both my windows flew open at once, and all their broken panes fell into my chamber with a sharp silvery sound, very pretty to hear. I opened my eyes and saw a white smoke, which slowly entered and came up to my bed, forming a thousand wreaths. I began to look at it in some astonishment, and quickly recognized it from its colour and its smell.

I ran to the window. Day began to dawn, and tinged with a faint light the whole of the old castle, still motionless, silent, and seemingly stunned by the first blow which it had just received. I saw nothing stirring. Only the old grenadier, placed on the rampart, and locked up there, according to custom, was walking very fast, his piece upon his arm, looking at

something towards the courts. He stalked along like a caged lion.

Every thing was still quiet; I began to think that the trying of cannon in the fossés had been the cause of this commotion, when a still more violent explosion took place. At the same moment I saw a sun, which was not that of the firmament, rising above the last tower towards the wood. Its rays were red; at the extremity of each was a bomb, which burst, and before them a cloud of gunpowder. This time, the keep, the barracks, the turrets, the ramparts, the village, and the wood shook, and seemed to slide from left to right, and to slide back again, like a drawer that is quickly opened and shut. A smash, as if all the porcelain at Sèvres were thrown out of window, plainly intimated to me that, of all the glass in the chapel, in the castle, in the barracks, and in the village, not a bit was left adhering to the putty. The cloud of white smoke parted into small wreaths.

"It is excellent powder when it forms such crowns as these," said Timoleon, entering my chamber dressed and armed.

"It seems to me that we are blowing up," said I.

"I cannot contradict you," replied he, coolly.

In three minutes I was, like him, dressed and armed, and we looked in silence at the silent old castle.

All at once, twenty drums beat to arms. The walls, roused from their stupefaction, called for assistance. The arms of the drawbridge began slowly to descend and let down their heavy chains on the other side of the fossé; this was to enable the officers to enter, and the inhabitants to go out. We ran to the portcullis; it opened to admit the strong and to turn out the weak.

A singular sight struck us: all the women were crowding to the gate, and, at the same time, all the horses of the garrison. From an unerring instinct of danger, they had broken their halters in the stables, or thrown off their riders, and waited, pawing the ground, till access to the fields should be opened to them. They ran through the courts, amidst the throng of women, neighing with fright, their manes bristling, their nostrils distended, their eyes red, rearing up on their hind legs against the walls, snuffing up the powder with horror, and burying their scorched noses in the sand.

A young and beautiful girl, rolled up in her bed-clothes, followed by her mother, half-dressed, and carried by a soldier, went out first, and the

whole crowd poured after them. This appeared to me, at the moment, an absolutely useless precaution; not a spot within six leagues of the castle was safe.

We entered on the run, as did all the officers who lodged in the village. The first thing that struck me was the calm countenance of our old grenadiers of the guard on duty at the entrance. Leaning upon their grounded arms, they looked knowingly towards the powder-magazine, but without uttering a word or quitting the prescribed attitude, with the hand on the strap of the piece. My friend, Ernest d'Hanache, commanded them. He saluted us with the smile *à la Henri* IV., which was natural to him. I gave him my hand. He was not destined to lose his life till the last disturbance in La Vendée, where he died nobly. All those whom I name in these yet recent recollections are already no more.

In running, I tripped against something that almost threw me down. It was a human foot. I could not forbear stopping to look at it.

"That is as your foot will be just now," said an officer to me as he passed, laughing heartily.

Nothing indicated that this foot had been covered with shoe or stocking. It looked as if it

were embalmed and preserved in the same manner as mummies; it was broken off about two inches above the ancle, like the feet of statues used for studies in artists' work-rooms, polished, veined like black marble, and having no flesh colour about it but at the nails. I had not time to make a drawing of it; I continued my run to the last court before the barracks.

There our men were waiting for us. In their first alarm, they had imagined that the castle was attacked; they had rushed from their beds to the arms' rack, and assembled in the court, most of them in their shirts only, with the musket on their arm. Nearly all had their feet covered with blood from being cut by the broken glass. They remained mute and motionless before a foe that was not human, and were heartily glad to see their officers coming to join them.

As for us, it was to the very crater of the volcano that we were hurrying. It was still smoking, and a third eruption was imminent. The small tower of the powder-magazine was gutted, and from its open flank a smoke was seen slowly issuing and eddying as it ascended.

Had all the powder in the turret exploded, or

was there yet left enough to hurl us all to destruction? This was the question. But there was another that was not doubtful, namely, that all the artillery-waggons, laden and half-open in the next court, would be blown up, if but a single spark reached them; and that the keep, containing four hundred thousand pounds of powder for cannon, Vincennes, its wood, its town, its fields, and part of the faubourg St. Antoine, would form a jumble of stones, bricks, tiles, branches, mould, and human heads, though ever so firmly set upon their respective shoulders.

The best auxiliary that discipline can find is danger. When all run the same risk, every one is silent, and clings to the first man who gives a judicious order, or sets a salutary example.

The first who flew to the waggons was Timoleon. With the same serious and sedate look as usual, but with an agility that surprized me, he threw himself upon a wheel that was taking fire. For want of water, he extinguished it by smothering the fire with his coat and by pressing his body against it. At first, we gave him up for lost; but, on going to his assistance, we found the wheel charred, his coat burned, his left hand a little spotted with black; but in

other respects his whole person uninjured. In a trice, all the waggons were dragged from the dangerous court, and hurried out of the fort into the plain of the polygon. Every gunner, every soldier, every officer, pulled, rolled, thrust, the formidable vehicles, with hand, feet, shoulders, or head.

The engines inundated the little powder-magazine through the black aperture in its bosom; it was cloven in all directions; twice it rocked to and fro; its flanks then burst like the bark of a huge tree, and, falling backward, it exhibited a sort of black and smoking furnace, in which the eye could not distinguish any known object; in which every engine of war, every projectile, was reduced to a reddish and gray powder, diluted with boiling water, a species of lava, in which blood, iron, and fire, were blended into a living mortar, and which ran out into the courts burning the grass in its way. This was the end of the danger: we had now to count our number and to ascertain our loss.

"They must have heard this in Paris," said Timoleon, grasping my hand. "I will go and write to relieve her from any apprehensions. There is nothing more to do here."

Without saying another word, away he went, to our little white house with green shutters, as though he was coming back from sporting.

CHAPTER XII.

A DRAWING IN CRAYON.

When dangers are over, we measure them and find them to have been great. We are astonished at our good luck, and turn pale at the fear that we should have been justified in feeling; we congratulate ourselves on not having been surprised into any weakness, and a sort of calm calculated horror creeps over us, to which, during the action, we were utter strangers.

Gunpowder, like lightning, performs incredible prodigies. The explosion had wrought miracles, not of force, but of address. It appeared to have measured its strokes and to have taken its aim. It had said: I will carry away that, but not those things which are close to it. It had lifted from the ground an arcade of hewn stone, removed it entire and in its proper form, and set it down on the greensward in the fields,

there to stand like a time-blackened ruin. It had buried three bombs six feet deep in the earth, ground pavements to dust under the cannon-balls, snapt a brass cannon in two, driven all the doors and windows into all the rooms, carried away the shutters from the attics of the great powder-magazine without a grain of its powder; it had rolled along ten thick stone posts, like overturned chess-men; it had broken the iron chains that fastened them together, as you would break a silken thread, and twisted their links as you would twist a bit of twine; it had ploughed up the court with broken gun-carriages, and enchased the pyramids of balls in the stones — and, under the nearest cannon to the destroyed magazine, it had left alive the white hen that we had noticed the preceding night. When this poor hen sallied forth unhurt from her lodging with her young brood, the cries of joy of our good soldiers greeted her as an old friend, and they began to fondle her with the thoughtlessness of children.

She turned round clucking, collecting her little family, and still wearing her red top-knot and her silver collar. She seemed to be waiting for the master who had been accustomed to supply

her with food, and ran wildly between our legs, surrounded by her chickens. In following her we came to a sight that made us shudder.

At the foot of the chapel lay the head and breast of the poor Adjutant, without body or arms. The foot against which I had stumbled on my first coming was his. No doubt, the unfortunate man had not been able to withstand the desire to inspect once more his barrels of powder and to count his bombs, and either the iron tips of his boots, or the rolling of a pebble, or some movement of something or other, had produced a spark and set fire to the whole.

His head and breast had been flung like a stone from a sling against the wall of the chapel, at the height of sixty feet, and the powder with which that frightful bust was impregnated had imprinted its form in a durable manner upon the wall at the foot of which it had fallen. Long did we contemplate it, and not a creature uttered a word of commiseration; perhaps because to pity him would have been to pity ourselves for having incurred the same danger. The surgeon in chief merely said:—"He suffered no pain."

For my part, he seemed to me to be still suffering; but, in spite of this, partly from an in

vincible curiosity, partly from bravado, I made a drawing of him.

Such is the state of things in a society from which sensibility is banished. That excess of force, by which we pretend to keep the character under constant control, is one of the bad sides of the military profession. We exercise ourselves in hardening our hearts, we steel our bosoms against pity, lest it should appear like weakness; we strive to conceal the divine feeling of compassion; without considering that, in locking up a good sentiment too closely, we stifle the prisoner.

I felt myself at that moment most hateful. My young heart was wrung with grief at this disaster, and, with obstinate tranquillity, I nevertheless proceeded with the drawing, which I have preserved, and which sometimes fills me with remorse for having made it, and at others reminds me of the circumstances which I have just related, and of the modest life of this brave soldier.

That noble head was now but an object of horror, a sort of Medusa's head; its colour was that of black marble. The hair bristled up, the eyebrows were turned back against the forehead, the eyes shut, the mouth open, as if uttering a

loud outcry. On that black bust was impressed terror at sight of the flames suddenly bursting forth. It was manifest that he had had time for this terror, rapid as gunpowder, and perhaps time for incalculable suffering.

"Had he time to think of Providence?" said the quiet voice of Timoleon d'Arc ***, who with an eye-glass was watching over my shoulder the progress of my drawing.

At the same moment, a jolly soldier, with ruddy face, light hair, and fair complexion, stooped down to take the black silk cravat from this smoky bust. "It is very good yet," said he. He was an honest fellow of my company, named Muguet, who had two chevrons on his arm, was not troubled either with scruples or melancholy, but was, nevertheless, the best son in the world. This broke the thread of our ideas.

The loud tramp of horses at length roused us. It was the King. Louis XVIII. came, in an open carriage, to thank his guard for having preserved his old soldiers and his old castle. He long surveyed the strange lithography on the wall. All the troops were drawn up. He raised his loud clear voice to ask the *chef de bataillon* what officers or what soldiers had distinguished themselves.

"Every man has done his duty, sire!" was the simple reply of M. de Fontanges, the most chivalrous and the most amiable officer I ever knew, a man of the world, who has furnished me with the best idea of what might have been the manners of a Duke de Lauzun and a Chevalier Grammont.

Upon this the King took from his carriage not crosses of honour but rouleaux of gold, which he gave to be distributed among the soldiers, and, passing through Vincennes, he left it by the wooden gate.

The ranks were broken, the explosion forgotten; no one thought of being dissatisfied, or imagined that he was more deserving than another. In fact, it was the crew saving the ship in order to save themselves — that was all. And yet I have since seen less bravery obtaining a superior reward.

I thought of the family of the poor Adjutant: but nobody else thought of it. In general, when princes visit such a scene, they are gone again too quickly.

PART III.

RECOLLECTIONS

OF

MILITARY GREATNESS.

PART III

RECOLLECTIONS OF MILITARY GREATNESS.

CHAPTER I.

REFLEXIONS ON MILITARY GREATNESS.

How often have we thus seen obscure accidents put an end to modest lives, which should have been supported and nourished by the collective glory of the Empire! Our army had assembled the invalids of the grand army, and they died in our arms, bequeathing to us the memory of their primitive and singular characters. To us they appeared to be the relics of a gigantic race, which, dropping off one by one, became extinct for ever. We admired all that was excellent and honourable in their charac-

ters; but our more studious generation could not help at times detecting in them something puerile and uncultivated, which the indolence of peace rendered the more conspicuous. The army seemed to us a body without motion. We were stifled, shut up in the belly of that wooden horse which never opened in any Troy. You, my companions, will recollect that we never ceased studying the Commentaries of Cæsar, Turenne, and Frederick II., and reading the lives of those generals of the Republic so purely smitten with glory, those candid and indigent heroes, such as Marceau, Desaix, and Kleber, young men of antique virtue; and, after we had examined their military manœuvres and their campaigns, we fell into a profound melancholy, on comparing our destiny with their's, and on calculating that their elevation had become such, because they had set foot at once, and at the age of twenty, on the top of that ladder of grades, each step of which it cost us eight years to climb. O ye, whom I have seen suffering so severely under the languor and disgust of military Servitude, it is especially for you that I write this book. Accordingly, besides those reminiscences in which I have exhibited some traits of what is excellent and honourable in the

army, but in which I have also detailed some of the galling littlenesses of military life, I will place the recollections that can make us proudly hold up our heads by the investigation and contemplation of its greatness.

Military Greatness, or the beauty of military life, seems to me to be of two kinds. There is that of command, and that of obedience. The one, all external, active, brilliant, proud, selfish, capricious, will be from day to day more rare and less desired, in proportion as civilization shall become more pacific; the other, all internal, passive, obscure, modest, devoted, persevering, will be daily more and more honoured; for, now that the spirit of conquest is dying away, whatever great an elevated character can bring into the profession of arms appears to me to consist less in the glory of fighting, than in the honour of suffering in silence, and fulfilling with fortitude duties that are frequently odious.

If the month of July, 1830, had its heroes, in you, O my gallant companions, it had its martyrs! Now ye are all separated and dispersed. Many of you retired in silence, after the storm, beneath the family roof; humble though it were, many have preferred it to the shade of a banner not their own. Others have gone to seek

their lilies on the heaths of La Vendée, and have once more moistened them with their blood; others have gone to die for foreign sovereigns; while others, yet bleeding from the wounds of the three days, have not been able to withstand the temptations of the sword. They have resumed it for France, and conquered citadels for her. Every where we find the same habit of giving themselves up, body and soul, the same irresistible impulse to devote themselves, the same desire of practising somewhere or other the art of enduring patiently and of dying well. But universally we find those to be pitied who have not had to fight where they have been cast.

Fighting is the life of the army. When it begins, the dream becomes reality, science becomes glory, and Servitude service. War compensates by its lustre for the inexpressible mortifications inflicted by the lethargy of peace on the slaves of the army; but, I repeat, it is not in battles that its purest greatness consists. I shall often speak of you to others, but, before I conclude this book, I wish to speak to you of yourselves, and of a life and a death which had in my eyes a character of extraordinary force and candour.

CHAPTER II.

A MEMORABLE NIGHT.

The night of the 27th of July, 1830, was silent and solemn. The recollection of it is more deeply impressed upon my mind, than that of more terrible scenes which it has been my lot to witness. The calm pervading earth and sea before the hurricane has not more majesty than had that of Paris before the revolution. The Boulevards were deserted. I walked their whole length alone, after midnight, looking and listening with greedy eye and ear. The heavens shed upon the earth the pale light of their stars, but the houses were dark, closed, and as if dead. All the street-lamps were broken. Some groupes of labouring men were still assembled near trees, listening to some mysterious orator, slipping off secret words among them in a low tone. They then separated, and, running away, entered the

dark and narrow streets. They thrust against little doors of alleys, which opened like traps, and closed after them again. Nothing was then stirring, and the city seemed to contain none but dead inhabitants and houses smitten with the plague.

You came at intervals upon a dark inert mass, which you did not recognize till you were close to it; this was a battalion of the Guards, standing, motionless, voiceless. Farther on, you found a battery of artillery surmounted by lighted matches, like twin stars.

You passed unmolested before these dark and imposing corps, you walked round them, you went to and fro, without a question or a word, good or bad. They were inoffensive, without anger, without hatred; they were resigned, and awaited whatever might happen.

As I approached one of the most numerous of the battalions, an officer stepped up to me, and with extreme politeness asked me if the flames that might be seen at a distance illuminating the Porte St. Denis did not proceed from some conflagration: he was just going to start with his company to ascertain that point. I told him that they proceeded from some large trees that had been felled and set on fire by the shop-

keepers, who took advantage of the disturbances to destroy these old elms, which concealed their shops. Then, seating himself on one of the stone benches of the Boulevard, he began to make lines and circles on the sand with his bamboo cane. It was by his cane that I recognized him, while he knew me again by my face. As I continued standing before him, he grasped my hand, and begged me to sit down by him.

Captain Renaud was a man of the strictest integrity and highly cultivated understanding, and at that time the Guards contained many such. His character and his habits were well known to us, and those who shall read these recollections need not be told on what serious face they ought to place his *nom de guerre*, given by the soldiers, adopted by the officers, and received indifferently by the man himself. Like the old families, the old regiments, preserved intact by peace, acquire familiar customs and invent characteristic names for their members. An old wound on the right leg produced Captain Renaud's habit of carrying wherever he went a bamboo cane, with a very curious head, which attracted the notice of all who beheld it for the first time. It was scarcely ever out of his hand. There was, however, no affectation in this habit;

his manners were too simple and serious for any thing of that sort. Still it was obvious that his attachment to it originated in some heartfelt motive. He was highly esteemed and respected in the Guards. Without ambition, and never wishing to be any thing but what he was, captain of grenadiers, he read a great deal, and talked as little as possible and in monosyllables. Very tall, very pale, and of a melancholy cast of countenance, he had on his forehead, between the eyebrows, a small deep scar, generally of a bluish colour, but which frequently turned black, and sometimes gave a fierce look to his habitually calm and tranquil visage.

He was a particular favourite with the soldiers; and it had been remarked, especially in the campaign in Spain, with what joy they started when the detachments were commanded by *Bamboo Cane*. And it was literally the bamboo cane that commanded them; for Captain Renaud never took a sword in his hand, even when at the head of the sharp-shooters he approached so near the enemy as to run the risk of being engaged with him man to man.

The captain not only possessed great experience in war, he had likewise so thorough an acquaintance with the great political affairs of

Europe during the Empire that you were puzzled to account for it: sometimes you were disposed to attribute it to profound study, at others to high and very old connexions, concerning which his perpetual reserve kept you quite in the dark.

The predominating characteristic, it is true, of the men of the present day is this very reserve, and that general trait was only carried to the extreme by the captain. At present, an appearance of cold politeness covers at once both character and actions. Hence I do not imagine that many can recognize themselves in the fierce-looking portraits which are drawn of us. Affectation is ridiculous in France to a greater degree than any where else; and hence it is, no doubt, that, instead of displaying in his features and in his language the excess of energy imparted by the passions, each studies to confine within himself violent emotions, profound sorrows, or involuntary excitements. I do not think that civilization has enervated every thing, but I see that it has masked every thing. I admit that this is a benefit; and I admire the reserved character of our time. In this apparent coldness there is modesty, and the genuine sentiments have need of it. There is also mixed up with

it somewhat of disdain — a good coin to pay for human things.

We have already lost many friends whose memory lives among us: you recollect them, my dear comrades. Some have died in war, others in duels, others by their own hands; all men of honour and of firm character, of strong passions, and yet of simple, cold, and reserved exterior. Ambition, love, gaming, hatred, jealousy, were secretly at work within them, but they never talked of them, and evaded every question that was too direct and too closely touched the bleeding wound of their hearts. You never saw them striving to attract notice in the saloons by a tragic attitude; and, had any young lady, fresh from the perusal of a novel, seen them quite submissive and, as it were, disciplined to the customary salutations and to simple chat in a low tone, she would have conceived a contempt for them; and yet in their lives and in their deaths, you know, they showed themselves men as energetic as Nature ever produced. The Catos and the Brutuses did not behave better, wearers though they were of togas. Our passions have as much energy as at any time, but it is only by the trace of their fatigues that the eye of a friend can recognize them. The exterior, the

language, the manners, have a certain measure of cold dignity which is common to all, and which is thrown off only by some few, who wish to appear great and to display all their strength. At present, the law of manners is decorum.

There is not a profession in which the coldness of the forms, language, and habits, contrasts more strikingly with the activity of the life than the profession of arms. In it the hatred of exaggeration is carried to a great length, and the language of a man who seeks to exaggerate what he feels, and to affect you by what he suffers, excites disdain. This I knew, and I was just going to leave Captain Renaud abruptly, when he took me by the arm and detained me.

"Did you see the manœuvre of the Swiss this morning?" said he; "it was a very curious one. They fired the *feu de chaussée* while advancing, with perfect precision. Since I have been in the service, I never saw application made of it before; it is a parade and Opera manœuvre; but, in the streets of a great city, it may be of use, provided the sections of the right and left form expeditiously in advance of the platoon that has just fired."

At the same time, he kept drawing lines on

the ground with the end of his cane. He then rose slowly, and, as he walked along the Boulevard, with the intention of getting to a little distance from the groupe of officers and soldiers, I accompanied him. He continued talking to me with a kind of nervous and seemingly involuntary excitement, which captivated me, and which I should never have expected from him, who was what is commonly called a cold man.

Laying hold of a button of my coat, he began with a very simple request. "Will you pardon me," said he, "if I request you to send me your gorget of the Royal Guard, if you have kept it till now? I have left mine at home, and I cannot send or go for it myself, because they are killing us in the street like mad dogs; but, as it is three or four years since you left the army, perhaps you may not have it still. I too had resigned my commission a fortnight ago, for I am quite tired of the army; but, the day before yesterday, when I saw the ordinances, I said: There will be fighting. I bundled together my uniform, my epaulettes, and my hairy cap, and away I went to the barracks to rejoin these brave fellows, who are going to be slaughtered in every corner, and who certainly would have thought in the bottom of their hearts that I

behaved unhandsomely in leaving them at such a critical moment; it would have been contrary to honour, would it not, entirely contrary to honour?"

"Were you aware," I asked, "that such ordinances were likely to be issued at the time when you resigned?"

"Not I, faith! Indeed I have not yet read them."

"Well then, what could you have to reproach yourself with?"

"Nothing but the appearance, and I should not have liked the mere appearance to be against me."

"That is really admirable," said I.

"Admirable! admirable!" exclaimed Captain Renaud, quickening his pace; "that is the present word, and what a puerile one! I detest admiration; it is the principle of too many bad actions. It is given at too cheap a rate at present and to every body. We ought to beware of admiring lightly. Admiration is corrupt and corrupts. We ought to do right for our own sakes, not for the sake of fame. Besides, I have my own ideas on that subject," added he, finishing abruptly; and he was about to leave me.

"There is something as illustrious as a great man," said I, "that is, a man of honour."

He grasped my hand affectionately. "That is my opinion as well as your's," said he, with warmth. "I have acted upon it all my life, but it has cost me dear. That is not so easy as people imagine."

Here the sub-lieutenant of his company came up and asked him for a cigar. He took several from his pocket, and gave them to him without speaking. The officers began to smoke, walking to and fro, in a silence and with a composure which the recollection of existing circumstances did not interrupt; none of them deigning to advert either to the dangers of the moment or to his duty, though thoroughly acquainted with both.

Captain Renaud came back to me. "'Tis a fine night," said he, pointing to the firmament with his cane. "I know not when I shall cease to see the same stars every night. I did once imagine that I should have an opportunity of seeing those of the South; but it was my lot not to be removed to another hemisphere. No matter! the weather is delightful. The Parisians are asleep, or pretend to be so. None of us has eaten or drunk for twenty-four hours; one's ideas are all the clearer for fasting.

"I recollect that, one day, when we were going to Spain, you asked me the reason why I had not obtained higher promotion. I had not then time to tell you, but to-night I feel tempted to revert to the history of my life, which I have been reviewing in my memory. You are fond of such histories, I recollect, and in your retirement you will take pleasure in the remembrance of us. If you will sit down on the parapet of the Boulevard with me, we may there talk it over very quietly, for they seem to me to have ceased for the present to pop at us from the windows and through the loopholes of cellars — I shall give you an account of only some periods of my history, and I shall just follow my caprice. I have seen a great deal and read a great deal, but I don't think that I should be able to write. It is not my profession, thank God! and I have never tried. But, at least, I know how to live, and I have lived as I resolved to do, as soon as I had the courage to take a resolution, and in truth that is not so easy a matter. Let us sit down."

I followed him slowly, and we passed through the battalion to get to the left of his fine grenadiers. They were gravely standing with their chins resting on the muzzles of their pieces.

Some young fellows were sitting on their knapsacks, being more fatigued with the day than the others. All were silent, and they were coolly engaged in putting to rights and repairing their accoutrements. There was not the slightest indication of uneasiness or discontent. They were in their ranks, as on a review day, waiting for the word of command.

When we were seated, our old comrade began, and related to me in his own way the history of three great epochs which laid open to me the spirit of his life, and furnished me with a key to the eccentricity of his habits, and to the melancholy that tinctured his character. My memory has carefully preserved every thing that he told me, and I shall repeat it nearly word for word.

CHAPTER III.

MALTA.

I AM nobody — he set out with saying — and happy it is for me at present to think so: if I were somebody, I might exclaim with Louis XIV:—"I have been too fond of war!"—Would you believe it? Bonaparte had intoxicated me when a boy, like every body else, and his glory filled my head so completely that I had no room in my brain for any other idea. My father, an old superior officer, always with the army, was almost a stranger to me, when, one day, he took it into his head to carry me to Egypt along with him.

I was then twelve years old, and I still recollect the sentiments of the whole army at that time, and those which already took possession of my soul, as though it were the present moment. Two spirits swelled the sails of our ships — the spirit of glory and the spirit of piracy. My father listened no more to the latter

than the north-east wind that wafted us; but the former buzzed so loud in my ears that it deafened me for a long time to all the sounds in the world, except Charles the Twelfth's music, that of the cannon. The voice of the cannon seemed to me the voice of Bonaparte; and, boy though I was, when they roared, I turned red with delight, I leaped for joy, I clapped my hands, I answered with loud shouts. These first emotions led on to that exaggerated enthusiasm which became the aim and the mania of my life. A memorable meeting for me decided that sort of fatal admiration, that senseless adoration, to which I was ready to sacrifice too much.

The fleet had sailed on the 30th of Floreal, year 6. I passed day and night on deck feasting myself with the sight of the boundless blue sea and of our ships. I counted one hundred sail, and I could not count them all. Our military line was a league in length, and the semicircle formed by the convoy was at least six. I said nothing. I looked at Corsica passing close to us, drawing Sardinia after, and presently Sicily appeared on our left. The Juno, which my father and I were on board of, was destined to act the part of a scout, and to form the advanced

guard with three other frigates. My father held me by the hand, and pointed out to me Mount Etna, pouring forth volumes of smoke, and rocks which I have not forgotten: there was Tavonia, and there Mount Erix. Marsala, the ancient Lilybœum, passed through its smoke, and its white houses looked like dove-cotes peering out of a cloud; and one morning .... yes, it was the 24th of Prairial, at dawn of day, I beheld a picture spread out before me that dazzled my eyes for the next twenty years.

Malta was there, with its forts, its guns level with the water, its long walls glistening in the sun, like newly polished marble, and its swarm of slender galleys running upon their long red oars. One hundred and ninety four French ships enveloped it with their broad sails and their blue, red, and white flags, which were hoisted at that moment, at every mast, while the standard of religion was slowly lowered upon Gozo and Fort St. Elmo; it was the last cross militant that fell. The fleet then fired five hundred guns.

The ship L'Orient was facing us, apart from the rest, huge and motionless. Before her slowly passed the ships of war one after another, and I saw at a distance Desaix salute Bonaparte.

We went to him on board L'Orient. At length I beheld him for the first time.

He was standing near the side of the ship, talking with Casa Bianca, the captain — poor Orient! — and playing with the hair of the captain's son, a boy about ten years old. I was instantly jealous of this boy, and my heart bounded within me when I saw him touch the general's sword. My father went up to Bonaparte, and talked with him a long time. I had not yet seen his face. All at once, he turned about and looked at me. I trembled all over at the sight of that sallow visage, surrounded by long pendent hair, looking as if it had been just dipped in the sea, of those large gray eyes, of those spare cheeks, and of that receding lip, over a peaked chin.

He must have been talking about me, for he said: "Hark ye, my brave Renaud; since you are bent on it, you shall go to Egypt, and General Vaubois shall stay here without you with his four thousand men; but I don't like boys to be taken along; I have allowed nobody but Casa Bianca to take his son; and that was wrong. You must send this lad back to France: I wish him to be a good hand at mathematics, and if any thing happens to you yonder, I promise you to take

charge of him, and I'll make him a good soldier." At the same time he stooped, and, laying hold of me under the arms, he lifted me up to his lips, and kissed my forehead. My head turned round. I felt that he was my master, and that he was stealing my soul from my father, whom, indeed, I scarcely knew, because he was for ever with the army. I was awe-struck, like Moses the shepherd, when he saw God in the burning bush. Bonaparte had lifted me up free, and when his arms gently set me down again upon the deck, they left me there, another of his slaves.

Only the day before, I should have thrown myself overboard rather than be separated from the army; but now I suffered them to carry me just where they pleased. My father I left with indifference and for ever. But bad are the best of us even from childhood; and what trifles lay hold of us, whether men or boys, and stifle in our bosoms the feelings of nature! My father was no longer my master, because I had seen his, and because all authority in the world seemed to me to emanate from the latter alone. O dreams of authority and slavery! O corrupting thoughts of power, fit to seduce children! False enthusiasms—subtle poisons—what antidotes shall we ever be able to find against you!

I was stupified — intoxicated. I determined to study hard, and I did study enough to turn my brain. I calculated night and day; and, while I took the dress and gained the learning, my face assumed the sallow hue, of the schools. From time to time, the guns interrupted me; and that voice of the demi-god proclaimed to me the conquest of Egypt, the 18th of Brumaire, Marengo, the Empire — and the Emperor kept his word. As for my father, I knew not what had become of him; when, one day, this letter was put into my hands.

I always keep it in this old pocket-book, which was once red, and I frequently read it over to convince myself completely of the uselessness of the advice given by one generation to that which comes after it, and to reflect on the absurd infatuation of my illusions.

Here the captain, unbuttoning his uniform, drew from his breast-pocket first his handkerchief, and next a small pocket-book, which he carefully opened; and we went into a coffee-house, where there was still a light, and where he read to me these fragments of letters, which —the reader shall presently learn why—are still in my possession.

CHAPTER IV.

A SIMPLE LETTER.

On board the English Ship, the Culloden,
off Rochfort, 1804.

Sent to France with Admiral Collingwood's permission.

It is of no use, my son, to tell you how this letter will reach you, and by what means I have been made acquainted with your conduct and your present situation. Suffice it for you to know that I am satisfied with you; but that, in all probability, I shall never see you again. This, I dare say, will not distress you much. You have known your father only at that age when the memory is not yet born, when the heart is not yet hatched. It opens within us later than is generally imagined, and that is a thing at which I have often been astonished; but, how is it to be helped? You are no worse than others, I presume. I must, therefore, not complain.

All that I have to tell you is, that I have been a prisoner to the English ever since the 14th of Thermider, year 6, or the 2nd of August, 1798, old style, which, they say, is coming into fashion again. I had gone on board L'Orient to endeavour to persuade the brave Brueys to sail for Corfu. Bonaparte had previously sent his poor aide-de-camp, Julien, who was silly enough to let the Arabs run away with him. I, however, contrived to get on board; but it was to no purpose. Brueys was obstinate as a mule. He said that he was sure to find a passage by which the ships could enter the harbour of Alexandria, but he added a few expressions so proud as to show me plainly that, at bottom, he was somewhat jealous of the land army. "Do they take us for smugglers?" said he. "Do they suppose that we are afraid of the English?" Better would it have proved for France, if he had been afraid.

But, if he had his faults, gloriously has he atoned for them. And, I may say, that painfully am I expiating the fault which I committed in staying on board his ship when he was attacked. Brueys was early wounded in the head and the hand. He continued the fight till a ball tore out his bowels. He was put, by his

own desire, into a sack of bran, and died on his quarter-deck. About ten o'clock, we saw clearly that nothing could save us from blowing up. The remains of the crew, excepting Casa Bianca, got into the boats and escaped. He staid till the last, as a matter of course; but his son, a fine boy, whom you once saw, I believe, came to me and said: "Citizen, what does honour command me to do?"—Poor little fellow! He was but ten years old, I believe, and he could talk of honour at such a moment! I took him on my knee in the boat, and I prevented him from seeing his father blown up with L'Orient, which was scattered aloft in the air like a shower of fire.

We were not blown up, it is true; but we were taken — a lot far more deplorable — and I came to Dover, in the custody of a brave English captain, named Collingwood, who now commands the Culloden. He is a gallant fellow, if ever there was one, who has been in the navy ever since 1761, and was only once ashore for two years at the time when he was married. His children, of whom he is incessantly talking, do not know him; and his wife is scarcely acquainted with his noble character but from his letters.

I feel clearly that grief for this defeat at

Aboukir has shortened my days; which, indeed, have been but too long, since I have witnessed such a disaster and the death of my glorious friends. My great age has touched every body here; and, as the climate of England has brought upon me a violent cough, and renewed my wounds, so as to deprive me entirely of the use of one arm, the kind Captain Collingwood has solicited and obtained for me—what he could not have obtained for himself, to whom the land is forbidden ground—the favour of being transferred to Sicily, where there is a warmer sun and a purer atmosphere. There I am sure to end my days: for seventy-eight years, seven wounds, deep chagrin, and captivity, are incurable complaints. I have nothing to leave you, poor boy, but my sword; nay, at present, I have not even that, for a prisoner has no sword.

But I have at least a piece of advice to give you, which is, to keep a rein on your enthusiasm for men who rise rapidly, and especially for Bonaparte. If I know any thing of you, you will be a Seide, and he must guard against Seidism who is a Frenchman, that is to say, highly susceptible of infection from that contagious disease. It is wonderful what a number of great and petty tyrants it has produced.

We are excessively fond of swaggerers, and we give ourselves up to them with such hearty good-will, that we are sure to repent it afterwards. The source of this failing is an urgent impulse to action and a great want of reflexion. The consequence is that we like infinitely better to resign ourselves, body and soul, to him who undertakes to think for us and to be responsible; reserving a right to laugh afterwards at ourselves and at him.

Bonaparte is a clever fellow, but he is really too much of a charlatan. I am afraid that he will become the founder of a new species of jugglery among us; we have plenty of it in France already. Quackery is insolent and corrupting, and it has set such examples in our age, and made such a noise, with drum and wand, in the public places, that it has glided into every profession, and that there is not a man, though ever so little, but is swollen with it. The number of frogs that burst themselves is incalculable. I most earnestly wish that my son may not be one of them.

I am very glad that he has kept his word, in taking charge of you according to his promise, but do not place too much confidence in it: I will tell you what passed at a certain dinner

while we were in Egypt, and I tell it you that you may often think of it.

On the 1st of Vendemiaire, year 7, being at Cairo, Bonaparte, member of the Institute, gave directions for a civic festival to be held on the anniversary of the establishment of the Republic. The garrison of Alexandria celebrated this festival around Pompey's Pillar, on which the tricoloured flag was hoisted; Cleopatra's Needle was wretchedly illuminated; and the troops in Upper Egypt held it as well as they could among the obelisks, the pillars, and the cariatides of Thebes, on the knees of the colossal Memnon, at the feet of the figures of Tama and Chama. The first *corps d'armée*, at Cairo, performed its manœuvres, and had its races and its fireworks. The commander-in-chief assembled to dinner the whole of the staff, the commissaries, the men of science, the pacha's kiaya, the emir, the members of the Divan, and the agas, around a table of five hundred covers, laid in the basement hall in the house which he occupied in the square of El Bequier: the cap of liberty and the crescent lovingly entwined one another; the Turkish and French colours formed a bower and a very pleasing tapestry, upon which the Koran and the Table of the

Rights of Man were joined in wedlock. After the guests had with their fingers crammed themselves with fowl and rice seasoned with saffron, water-melons, and other fruit, Bonaparte, who had yet said nothing, cast a rapid glance at them all. The brave Kleber, who lay at full length by the side of him, because he could not double up his long legs in the Turkish fashion, gave a violent nudge to the elbow of his neighbour, Abdallah Menou, and said with his half German accent: "Kark! Ali Bonaparte is going to say one of his good things.'

He called him so because, at the festival of Mahomet, the General had amused himself with assuming the Turkish dress, and, at the moment when he had declared himself the protector of all religions, the title of son-in-law of the Prophet and the name of Ali Bonaparte had been decreed him.

Kleber had scarcely done speaking, and was combing up his long fair hair with his fingers, when little Bonaparte was already on his legs; and, raising his glass to his meagre chin and his huge cravat, he said in a shrill, clear, and snappish voice: "Let us drink to the year three hundred of the French Republic!"

Kleber, with his face against Menou's shoulder,

laughed so heartily that he made him spill his wine upon an old aga, and Bonaparte looked at them both askance, knitting his brows.

And assuredly, my boy, he had reason to do so, because, in the presence of the commander-in-chief, a general of division ought not to behave indecorously, even though he were a dare-devil like Kleber; but, as for them, they were not quite in the wrong either, since Bonaparte at this present moment is called *Emperor*, and you are his page.

In fact, said Captain Renaud, taking back the letter from my hand, I had just been appointed page to the Emperor in 1804.—Ah! what a terrible year was that! what events it brought along with it when it did come! and with what attention I should have considered it, had I then been capable of considering any thing! But I had neither eyes to see, nor ears to hear, aught but the actions of the Emperor, the voice of the Emperor, the gestures of the Emperor, the steps of the Emperor. His approach intoxicated, his presence magnetized me. The glory of holding an appointment about the person of that man seemed to me the highest thing in the world; and never did lover

feel his mistress's ascendency with more vehement, more overwhelming, emotions than those which the sight of him produced every day in me. Admiration of a military chief becomes a passion, a fanaticism, a frenzy, which make slaves, maniacs, blind wretches, of us all.

That poor letter which I have just shown you, I regarded as nothing more than what schoolboys call a *sermon;* and I felt only that impious relief of children who find themselves delivered from the natural authority, and fancy themselves free, because they have chosen the chain which the general infatuation has riveted about their necks. But I had sufficient native good feeling left to make me keep this sacred epistle, and its authority over me has increased in proportion as my dreams of heroic subjection were dispelled. It has ever remained enshrined in my heart, and at length it struck invisible root there, as soon as sound reason cleared away from my sight the mists which had enveloped it. I could not forbear reading it over again once more with you, and I cannot but pity myself when I consider how slow has been the curve which my ideas have followed to return to the more solid and more simple base of the conduct of a man. You shall see into how little it

resolves itself; but, in truth, sir, I think that is sufficient for the life of an honest man, and it took me a long time to discover the source of the true greatness that there may be in the almost barbarous profession of arms.

Here Captain Renaud was interrupted by an old sergeant of grenadiers, who placed himself at the door of the coffee-house, holding his piece in the manner of a subaltern, and drawing from the strap a letter written on coarse paper. The captain calmly rose, and opened the paper; it contained an order.

"Tell Bejaud," said he to the sergeant, "to copy this into the order-book."

"The sergeant-major is not returned from the Arsenal," said the subaltern in a voice meek as that of a young girl, and casting down his eyes, without even deigning to say how his comrade had been killed.

"Let the quarter-master take his place," said the captain, without asking any questions, and he signed his order on the back of the sergeant, which served him for a desk.

He hemmed twice or thrice, and then quietly resumed his narrative.

CHAPTER V.

THE OVERHEARD DIALOGUE.

My poor father's letter and his death, the tidings of which reached me soon afterwards, made so deep an impression upon me, intoxicated though I was, and absolutely fascinated by the sound of my spurs, as to give a great shock to my blind zeal, and I began to examine more closely and more calmly what there was supernatural in the glory that dazzled me. I asked myself, for the first time, wherein consisted that ascendency which we allow enterprising men invested with absolute power to assume over us; and I ventured to make some inward efforts to set bounds in my mind to the voluntary donation of so many to one man. This first shock made me open my eyes, and I had the courage to look in the face the eagle which had carried me off, a mere child, and which clasped my sides with his talons.

It was not long before I found occasions to

examine more closely and to spy out the character of the great man in the obscure actions of his private life. We served thus far as equerries, secretaries, and aides de camp, according to the pleasure of the master, who took just what he found at hand. He liked already to people his ante-chambers, and, as the fondness for rule followed him every where, he could not forbear showing it in the most trifling matters, and tormenting those around him by the indefatigable exercise of an ever-present will. He amused himself with my bashfulness; he played with my terrors and my respect.

Sometimes he would call me abruptly, and, when he saw me enter pale and stammering, he would divert himself in making me speak a long time, to see how the surprise would confuse my ideas. Sometimes, while I was writing from his dictation, he would all at once pull my ear, in his way, and ask me some unexpected question concerning some simple point in geography or algebra, involving a problem which any child could solve; it then seemed as if a thunderbolt were falling upon my head. I knew a thousand times more than he asked, I knew more than he supposed, nay, I knew more than himself, but his eye paralysed me. When he was out of the

room, I could breathe again; the blood began to circulate in my veins; my memory returned, and with it an inexpressible shame; rage seized me; I wrote down the answer that I ought to have given him, then rolled on the carpet, wept, and had a good mind to put an end to my life.

"What!" said I, "are there then heads so strong as to be sure of every thing, and not to hesitate before any one?—men who are confident of their influence over all around them, and whose assurance crushes others by making them believe that the key of all knowledge and of all power, a key so eagerly sought after, is in their pocket, and that they have but to open it and to take out of it infallible information and authority?— I felt, nevertheless, that this was a false and usurped force. I rebelled; I exclaimed: "He lies! His attitude, his voice, his gestures, are but the pantomime of an actor, a wretched parade of sovereignty, of the vanity of which he must be sensible. It is not possible that he can believe so sincerely in himself! He forbids us all to lift the veil, but he sees himself naked beneath it. And what does he see? a poor ignoramus like any of us, and withal a weak creature!"

But I knew not how to penetrate to the bottom of that disguised soul. Power and glory defended him at all points; I went round him without succeeding in detecting any thing, and this porcupine, ever armed, rolled before me, panoplied from head to foot in sharp spikes.

One day, however, Chance, the master of us all, made an opening among them, and allowed a momentary gleam to penetrate amidst these spikes and darts.—One day, perhaps it was the only one in his life, he met with his match, and recoiled for an instant before an ascendency mightier than his own. This I witnessed, and I felt myself avenged.

We were at Fontainebleau. The Pope had just arrived. The Emperor had waited impatiently for his coming to anoint him at his coronation, and had received him in his carriage, each mounting at the same moment at opposite sides, with an apparently neglected but deeply calculated etiquette, so as neither to yield nor to take precedence—an Italian stratagem. He was coming back to the palace, where all was in a bustle.

I had left several officers in the room preceding that of the Emperor, and I was alone in

his. I looked at a long table, the top of which was not of marble, but of Roman mosaics, and covered with a great heap of petitions. I had often seen Bonaparte come in and subject them to a strange ordeal. He did not take them up either in order or at random, but, when their number irritated him, swept his hand over the table, from left to right and from right to left, like a mower, and dispersed them till he had reduced the heap to five or six, which he opened. This kind of disdainful sport had deeply affected me. All these papers of distress and sorrow, rejected and flung upon the floor, carried away as by a blast of anger; these useless prayers of widows and orphans, having no chance of relief but in the manner in which the loose papers were swept off by the consular hand; all these touching appeals, moistened with the tears of families, kicked about by his boots, and over which he walked as over his slain on the field of battle, represented to me the destiny of France at that time as a sinister lottery; and, mighty as was the rude and indifferent hand that drew the lots, I thought that it was not just to sacrifice thus to the caprice of his sweeping fists so many obscure fortunes, which might some day have been as splendid as

his own, had a point of support been granted to them. I felt my heart throb and revolt against Bonaparte, but shamefully, but like a slave's heart, as it was. I surveyed those contemned letters; unheard moans issued from their profaned folds, and, picking them up myself to read and then throwing them down again, I set myself up for judge between the unfortunate writers and the master whom they had given themselves, and who was that day going to place his foot more firmly than ever upon their necks.

I held in my hand one of these despised petitions, when the sound of the drums, beating the march, apprized me of the sudden arrival of the Emperor. Now, you must know that, as you see the flash of a gun before you hear the report, so you were sure to see him almost as soon as you heard the sound of his approach, so rapid were his motions, so anxious did he seem to make the most of life, and to crowd his actions as closely as possible together. When he entered the court of the palace on horseback, his guides had great difficulty to keep up with him; and the post had not time to take arms, before he had alighted from his horse and was ascending the staircase. On this occasion, I heard the

sound of his heels at the same moment as that of the drums. I had barely time to slip into the alcove of a great state bed which was not used, fortified by a princely balustrade, and the curtains of which, sprinkled with bees, were luckily more than half drawn.

The Emperor was violently agitated: he walked alone in the room, like one who is waiting impatiently for somebody, clearing in a second thrice his own length; he then went to the window, and began to drum a march upon it with his nails. A carriage presently rolled into the court; he ceased drumming, stamped twice or thrice, as if vexed at the sight of something that was done too slowly for him, then went hastily to the door, and opened it to the Pope.

Pius VII. entered alone. Bonaparte shut the door behind him with the despatch of a gaoler. I felt thoroughly frightened, I must confess, on finding myself the third in such company. However, I remained voiceless and motionless, looking and listening with all the powers of my mind.

The Pope was of lofty stature; his face was long, sallow, care-worn, but full of a holy dignity and unbounded benevolence. His dark

eyes were large and brilliant; his mouth was half open with a friendly smile, to which his projecting chin gave a strong expression of shrewdness and intelligence—a smile which had nothing of political insensibility, but every thing of Christian kindness. A white cap covered his long hair, which was black, but marked with broad silvery streaks. He wore a short mantle of red velvet, carelessly thrown over his curved shoulders, and his robe trailed over his feet. He entered slowly, with the calm and discreet step of an aged matron. He went and seated himself, with downcast eyes, in one of the large Roman arm-chairs, gilt and decorated with eagles, and waited to hear what the other Italian had to say.

Ah, sir, what a scene! what a scene! methinks I behold it still. It was not the genius of the man, but his character, that it laid open to me; and if his vast mind did not then unfold itself, his heart at least burst forth. Bonaparte was not then what you have since seen him; he had not that corpulence, that bloated and sickly face, those gouty legs, all that infirm obesity which art has seized to produce a *type* of him, according to the present mode of expression, and which has left the public a certain popular

and grotesque figure of him, which serves as a plaything for children, and which, some day, perhaps, will make him appear as fabulous a creature of the imagination as misshapen Punch himself. He was not so then, sir, but muscular and supple, active, brisk, elastic, convulsive in his gestures, graceful in some motions, polished in his manners; his chest flat and sunk between the shoulders, and such still as I had seen him at Malta, with melancholy and bilious face.

He did not desist from pacing the floor after the Pope had entered; he began to prowl around the chair like a prudent sportsman; and, stopping all at once facing it, in the stiff and motionless attitude of a corporal, he resumed the thread of a conversation commenced in the carriage, interrupted by their arrival, and which he was impatient to renew.

"I repeat to your Holiness, I am no free-thinker, not I, and I am not fond of reasoners and metaphysicians. I assure you that, in spite of my old republicans, I will go to mass."

He flung these last words sharply at the Pope, like a censer swung under your nose, and paused to await their effect; thinking that the circumstances, how nearly soever approaching to impiety, which had preceded this interview, must

give extraordinary weight to this sudden and positive declaration. The Pope cast down his eyes, and placed his hands on the two eagles' heads which formed the arms of his chair. By this attitude of a Roman statue, he seemed plainly to intimate: I must listen with resignation to all the profane things that he shall think fit to say to me.

Bonaparte walked round the room and the arm-chair that was in the midst of it, and I saw, by the sidelong glance which he cast at the aged pontiff, that he was not pleased either with himself or with his adversary, and that he blamed himself for having been too abrupt in this renewal of the conversation. He began, therefore, directly to speak again, still pacing round and round, casting furtive and piercing glances at the mirrors in which the grave figure of his Holiness was reflected, and looking at him in profile when he passed near him, but never full in the face, lest he should seem too anxious about the impression of his words.

"There is one thing, Holy Father," said he, "which lies upon my heart: it is this—that you consent to the anointing in the same manner as you formerly did to the Concordant, as if you were forced to it. You put on the air of a

martyr before me: there you are, looking as if resigned, as if offering your griefs to Heaven. But, indeed, that is not your situation; you are not a prisoner, by God!—you are free as the air!"

Pius VII. gave a sad smile, and looked him in the face. He felt how prodigious were the exactions of that despotic character, who, like all spirits of the same nature, was not content to be obeyed unless you obeyed with a semblance of having ardently desired what he ordered.

"Yes," resumed Bonaparte, with increased emphasis, "you are perfectly free; you can return to Rome; the route is open; nobody detains you."

The Pope sighed, and raised his right hand and his eyes to heaven, without replying. Then, slowly lowering his wrinkled brow, he fixed his eyes on the gold cross suspended from his neck.

Bonaparte continued speaking, while taking his rounds more leisurely. His voice became mild and his smile peculiarly gracious.

"If, Holy Father, the gravity of your character did not prevent me, I should say, indeed, that you are rather ungrateful. You do not seem to be sufficiently mindful of the good

services that France has rendered you. The conclave at Venice, which elected you Pope, did appear to me to have been somewhat influenced by my campaign in Italy, and by a word that I dropped concerning you. At that time, Austria did not treat you well, and I was very sorry for it. Your Holiness was, I believe, obliged to return to Rome by sea, because you were not allowed to pass through the Austrian territories."

He paused to await the answer of his silent and involuntary visiter; but Pius made only an inclination of the head that was scarcely perceptible, and remained as though overwhelmed with a dejection which prevented him from listening.

Bonaparte, with his foot, then pushed a chair close to the great arm-chair on which the Pope was seated. I trembled, because, when he came to fetch this chair, his epaulette had brushed the curtain of the alcove in which I was concealed.

"In fact," he continued, "it was as a Catholic that I was grieved at this. I never had time to study divinity much, not I; but I put great faith in the power of the Church; it has a prodigious vitality, Holy Father. Voltaire

has done you some mischief, but I like him not, and I am going to slip an old unfrocked Oratorian at him. You shall have no reason to complain, depend upon it. We could, if you will, do many things by and by."

Here he assumed a look of innocence and youth extremely coaxing.

"For my part, I do not know — I cannot discover— I do not see, indeed, why you should have any objection to fix your residence in Paris for good. I would give up the Tuileries to you, faith, if you liked. You will there find your Montecavallo chamber quite ready for you. As for me, I am scarcely ever there. Do you not see, *Padre*, that here is the real metropolis of the world? I would do every thing you wished; for, after all, I am a better boy than people take me for. Provided that war and the toil of politics were left to me, you should manage the Church just as you pleased. I should be your soldier entirely. Would not that be capital, think you? We would have our councils, like Constantine and Charlemagne; I would open them and close them; I would then put into your hand the real keys of the world, and since, as our Saviour said, 'I came with the sword,' I would keep the sword to my share; only

I would bring it to you for your benediction after every success of our arms."

He made a slight inclination while uttering the concluding words.

The Pope, who had thus far continued motionless, like an Egyptian statue, slowly raised his half bowed head, gave a melancholy smile, uplifted his eyes, and said, after a gentle sigh, as though confiding his thoughts to his invisible guardian angel: *Commediante!*

Bonaparte sprang from his chair, and bounded like a wounded leopard. He was in a real passion, one of his yellow passions. He paced the floor, at first without speaking, biting his lips till they bled again. He no longer turned in a circle round his prey, with gentle look and cautious step, but stalked straight forward, to and fro, stamping and making his spurred heels clatter. The room fairly shook; the curtains trembled like the trees at the approach of a thunder-storm; methought some great and awful event was going to happen; my hair pained me, and I involuntarily clapped my hand on it. I looked at the Pope; he stirred not, but merely grasped with both hands the eagles' heads on the arms of the chair. The bomb suddenly burst.

"Comedian! — I a comedian! — Ah! I will give you comedies such as shall make you all cry like women and children! — Comedian! — Ah! you are mistaken, if you think to get the better of me by insolent coolness! My theatre is the world; the part I play is that of manager and author; for comedians, I have all of you — Pope, Kings, People! and the thread by which I move you is — fear! — Comedian! Ah! it would take a better man than you to dare to applaud or to hiss me. *Signor Chiaramonti*, are you aware that you would be but a poor parish priest if it so pleased me? Why, France would laugh outright in your face at you and your tiara, if I were not to put on a grave look when saluting you.—It is only four years since nobody durst talk aloud of Christ. Who then would have talked of the Pope, if you please? —Comedian! Ah, gentlemen, you are getting on too fast with us! You are out of humour because I have not been silly enough to sign, like Louis XIV., the renunciation of the liberties of the Gallican church? But I am not to be piped to in that manner. It is I who hold you in my fingers; it is I who carry you from south to north like puppets; it is I who make believe to account you something, because you represent

an old idea that I want to revive ; and you have not sense enough to see this, and to do as though you did not perceive it !—But no ; one must tell you every thing ; one must put every thing under your noses before you can comprehend it. And you seriously believe that one cannot do without you, and you lift up your heads and muffle yourselves in women's drapery ! But know that this has no effect whatever upon me, and that if you persevere — yes, you ! — I will serve it as Charles XII served the grand vizir's—I will tear it in pieces with my spur."

He ceased speaking. I durst not breathe. No longer hearing his thundering voice, I stretched forth my head, to see if the poor old man was dead with fright. There he sat, with the same composure in his attitude and the same composure on his countenance. A second time he raised his eyes to heaven, and, after heaving a deep sigh, he smiled bitterly, and said: *Tra-gediante !*

At this moment, Bonaparte was at the other end of the room, leaning against the marble chimney-piece as high as himself. He darted like an arrow towards the old man ; I thought he was going to kill him. But he stopped short, took up from the table a vase of Sèvres porce-

lain on which were painted the Castle of St. Angelo and the Capitol, and, throwing it on the marble hearth, crushed it to atoms with his feet. All at once he sat down, and remained for some time motionless, and maintained a profound and threatening silence.

I was relieved. I concluded that he had yielded to cool reflexion, and that reason had resumed its empire over the ebullition of passion. He became sad; his voice was low and melancholy, and from the very first accent I knew that he was undisguised, and that this Proteus, quelled by two words, now appeared what he really was.

"Miserable life!" he ejaculated. He then mused, tore the border of his hat, without speaking for a minute or two, and, on rousing, began talking to himself.

"'Tis very true! — Tragedian or Comedian! —All is acting, all has been costume with me for a long time, and will be so for ever! What fatigue! what littleness! Sitting! always sitting! in full face for this party, in profile for that, according to their notions. To appear what they like one to be, and to guess aright their idiot dreams! —to place them all between hope and fear! —to dazzle them with dates and

bulletins!—to bind them by spells of distance and spells of names!—to be master of them all, and not know what to do with them!—that is all, faith!—And after this all, to be annoyed as I am—it is indeed too bad—For, in truth," he proceeded, crossing his legs and throwing himself back in the arm-chair, "I am horribly annoyed—As soon as I sit down, I am ready to burst with *ennui*.—I could not hunt three days at Fontainebleau, without dying of sheer languor. For my part, I must be moving and make others move. If I know where to, though, I'll be hanged!

"You see I am open-hearted with you. I have plans for the lives of forty emperors; I form one every morning and another every night; I have an indefatigable imagination; but, before I have time to execute two of them, I should be worn out, body and soul; for our poor lamp does not burn long. And frankly, if all my plans were carried into effect, I would not swear that the world would be much happier for them; but it would be more brilliant, and a majestic unity would reign over it.—I am no philosopher, not I, and I know not a creature that has common sense but our secretary at Florence. I understand nothing of certain

theories. Life is too short to stand still. As soon as I have thought, I execute. People will find explanations enough for my actions, after I am gone, to exalt me if I succeed, and to abase me if I fall. Plenty of paradoxes are quite ready; they abound in France. I will silence them while I live, but afterwards —— never mind! my business is to succeed, and that I understand. I make my Iliad in action, for my part, and that every day."

Here he rose, with cheerful promptness and something lively and brisk in his manner. At that moment he was natural and true; he thought not of giving a picture of himself, as he did afterwards in his dialogues at St. Helena; he thought not of idealising himself, or of composing his person so as to realize the finest philosophical conceptions; he was himself, turned inside out. — He went up to his Holiness, and walked before him. There, warming, and laughing half ironically, he spoke nearly as follows, mixing up together the trivial and the grand, according to his custom, and talking with inconceivable volubility—the rapid expression of that prompt and ready genius, which guessed every thing at once, without study.

"Birth is every thing," said he; "those who

come into the world poor and destitute are always desperate. This turns either to action or suicide, according to the character of the individual. When they have courage, like me, to put their hands to any thing, then, faith, they play the devil. And can you blame them? One must live. One must find one's place and make one's hole. For my part, I have made mine, like a cannon-ball. So much the worse for those who stood in my way.—Some are satisfied with little, others never have enough. What is to be done? Each eats according to his appetite, and mine was excessively keen.—Look you, Holy Father, at Toulon I had not wherewithal to buy a pair of epaulettes, and, instead of them, I had a mother and I know not how many brothers and sisters on my shoulders. These are all provided for at present, and decently enough, I hope. Josephine married me almost out of pity, and now we are going to crown her, in spite of the beard of Raguideau, her solicitor, who said that I had but little or nothing but my sword. And, faith! he was not far wrong either. — Imperial mantle, crown, what are these? what are they to me? Costume, actor's costume! I shall put them on for an hour, and I shall have had enough of them. I shall then

resume my plain officer's dress and mount my horse. Always on horseback! all my life on horseback! I should not sit here for a day without running the risk of being thrown under the chair. Is that any thing enviable?

"I tell you, Holy Father, there are in the world but two classes of people, those who have, and those who are striving to get. The former go to bed, the latter keep stirring. As I learned this lesson early and seasonably, I shall get pretty forward—that's all. There have been only two who began at forty that made any progress — Cromwell and Jean Jacques: if you had given one of them a farm, and the other twelve hundred francs and his maid-servant, they would neither have preached, nor commanded, nor written.—There are makers of houses, of colours, of figures, of phrases; as for me, I am a maker of battles. That is my profession. At thirty-five I have made eighteen, which are called—Victories! It is right that I should be paid for my work; and a throne is not too high a price for it.—Besides, I shall go on working. You will see a good many more. You will see all the dynasties date from mine, upstart and elected though I be. Elected, like you, Holy Father, and taken from among

the crowd. On that point we may shake hands."

And, stepping close to him, he held out his white, bold hand towards the attenuated and timid hand of the good Pope, who, perhaps, softened by the kindly tone of this last movement of the Emperor's, perhaps by an inward recurrence to his own destiny and a sad foreboding of the future lot of christian societies, gently gave him the ends of his fingers, with the air of a grandmother making it up with a boy, whom she is sorry for having scolded so severely. He nevertheless shook his head with a look of sadness, and I saw a tear start from his fine eyes, and trickle rapidly down his wan and emaciated cheek. To me it seemed like the last farewell of expiring Christianity, leaving the earth to selfishness and chance.

Bonaparte cast a furtive glance at this tear wrung from an afflicted heart, and I even detected at one corner of his mouth a rapid movement resembling a smile of triumph. At this moment, that omnipotent nature appeared to me less elevated and less noble than that of his holy adversary. This made me blush behind my curtains for all my past enthusiasm. A sadness such as I had never felt came over me on

discovering how little the highest political greatness may become in its cold artifices of vanity, its miserable snares, and its libertine abominations. I saw that he had not been really angry with his prisoner, that it afforded him a secret gratification not to have shown any weakness in this tête-à-tête, and that he had given way to the gust of passion in order to bend the captive under the effect of fatigue, of fear, and of all those infirmities which moisten the eyes of an old man with inexplicable emotion. He had been determined to have the last word, and, without adding another, he left the room as abruptly as he had entered. I did not see whether he saluted the Pope, but I believe he did not.

CHAPTER VI.

A SEAMAN.

As soon as the Emperor had quitted the apartment, two ecclesiastics came to his Holiness, and, supporting him under each arm, led him away, faint, agitated, and trembling.

I staid till night in the alcove where I had overheard this conversation. My ideas were confounded, but it was not the terror of this scene that deranged them. I was overwhelmed by what I had seen, and now, knowing to what paltry calculations of purely personal ambition Genius was capable of descending, I hated that passion, which had just degraded before my face the most brilliant of rulers — him who will perhaps give his name to the age, for having thrown it back ten years in its march. I felt that it was folly to devote one's self to any man, since despotic authority cannot fail to render our weak hearts wicked; but I knew not to what idea I was thenceforward to attach myself.

I have told you that I was then eighteen, and I had still within me but a vague instinct of the true, the good, the beautiful, though sufficiently strong to engage me incessantly in the search after them. That is the only thing in me that I esteem.

I deemed it my duty to keep what I had seen to myself; but I had reason to imagine, from what soon afterwards happened, that my sudden disappearance from the Emperor's suite had been noticed. I remarked no change in the manner of the sovereign towards me; but I passed very few more days about his person, and the attentive study that I purposed making of his character was suddenly cut short. I received orders one morning to set out immediately for the camp at Boulogne, and, on my arrival, was directed to go on board one of the flat-bottomed boats which were upon trial there.

I set out with much less pain than I dare say I should have done, had I been obliged to take this journey before the scene at Fontainebleau. I breathed more freely as I left behind me that old palace and its forest, and, from this involuntary relief, I felt that my Seidism had received a death-blow. I was grieved at first at this

discovery, and I trembled for the dazzling illusion which imposed this blind attachment upon me as a duty. The great egotist had exhibited himself naked before me; but, when I had got to a distance from him, I began to contemplate him in his works, and by means of this view he regained over me part of that magic ascendency by which he had fascinated the world. However, it was rather the gigantic idea of war which henceforward haunted me than that of him who represented it in such an awful manner; and, at this grand sight, I felt an insensate enthusiasm for the glory of battles increasing within me, silencing all scruples respecting the master who ordered them, and making me regard with pride the perpetual toil of those who all appeared but as his humble workmen.

The picture was in reality Homeric, and fit to captivate scholars by the incessant bustle of action. Something false was nevertheless blended with it, and presented itself to me, though as yet but vaguely and indistinctly; and I felt the necessity of a better life than mine, which should enable me to discover the ground of all this. I had just learned to measure the captain; it was now requisite that I should sound war. I will tell you what new event gave

me this second lesson. For I have had three severe lessons in my life, and, after meditating on them every day, I relate to you the circumstances by which they were furnished. Their shocks were violent, and the last completely overthrew the idol of my soul.

The apparent demonstration of conquest and of an invasion of England, the revival of the memory of William the Conqueror, the discovery of Cæsar's camp at Boulogne, the sudden assembling of nine hundred vessels in that port under the protection of a fleet of five hundred sail, continually announced; the formation of camps at Dunkirk and Ostend, at Calais, at Montreuil, and at St. Omer, under the command of four marshals; the military throne, from which fell the first stars of the Legion of Honour; the reviews, the festivities, the partial attacks — all this parade reduced, according to geometrical language, to its simplest expression, had three objects: to annoy England, to lull Europe, to concentrate and to excite the enthusiasm of the army.

These three points gained, Bonaparte suffered the artificial machine, which he had been setting to work at Boulogne, to drop piecemeal. When I arrived, it was playing empty like the water-

works at Marly. The generals there were still making the false movements of an ardour which they did not feel. They continued to send to sea a few miserable vessels, disdained by the English, and sunk by them from time to time. A command was given to me in one of these vessels, the very day after my arrival.

On that day there was but a single English frigate at sea. She tacked with slow and majestic motion; she sailed to and fro, she inclined first to one side and then to the other, she looked at herself in the watery mirror, she glided along, she stopped short, she sported in the sun, like a swan that is bathing herself. The miserable flat-bottomed boat — a new and wretched contrivance — had ventured out pretty far, with four others of the same kind; and, having held on our course ever since morning, we began to be proud of our hardihood, when we discovered all at once the peaceful gambols of the frigate. They would no doubt have appeared to us extremely graceful and poetical, beheld from the shore, or if she had merely amused herself by playing her pranks between England and us, but it was, on the contrary, between us and France. We were above a league from the shore. This made us thoughtful.

We set all our wretched sails, and plied our still more wretched oars; and, while we were exerting our utmost efforts, the peaceful frigate continued to take her sea-bath and to describe a thousand pleasing figures around us, changing her pace and her direction like a well-trained horse, and making esses and zeds upon the water in the most delightful manner. We remarked that she had the good-nature to let us pass several times in front of her without firing one of her guns; nay, all at once, she drew them back and closed her ports.

I really imagined at first that this was a purely pacific manœuvre, and was puzzled to account for such politeness. But a sturdy old seaman roused me by nudging my elbow. "That looks bad," said he. In fact, after she had suffered us to run a good way ahead of her, like mice before a cat, the amiable and beautiful frigate bore down upon us in full sail, and, without deigning to fire, dashed against us with her prow, as a horse with his chest, smashing, crushing, sinking, and passing merrily over us, leaving a few boats to pick up the prisoners, of whom I was one, and the tenth out of two hundred who had left Boulogne in the morning. The name of this beautiful frigate was the

Naïad, and, to keep up the good old French habit of punning, we afterwards never called her any thing but the *Noyade.*

I had received such a severe ducking that they were on the point of throwing me overboard for dead, when an officer, examining my pocket-book, found in it the letter from my father, which you have just read, with Lord Collingwood's signature. He caused more particular attention to be paid to me; some signs of life were perceived; and, when I recovered the use of my senses, I found myself, not on board the graceful Naïad, but in the Culloden. I inquired who commanded her. Admiral Collingwood, was the laconic reply. I concluded that this must be a relative of the Lord Collingwood who had known my father, but when I was taken to him I discovered my mistake. It was the same man.

I could not repress my surprise when he told me, with truly paternal kindness, that, after having had the father in his custody, he was far from expecting that he should ever have to take charge of the son, but he hoped that he should have no more reason to complain of the one than of the other; that he was present at the last moments of that old officer, and that,

on learning my name, he had directed me to be brought on board his ship. He spoke the best French, with a melancholy mildness, the expression of which has never been effaced from my memory. He offered me permission to remain on board the Culloden, on giving my word of honour not to make any attempt at escape.

I gave my word, without hesitation, after the manner of youths of eighteen; and, faring much better in the Culloden than I should have done in a prison ship, surprised at meeting with nothing to justify the prejudices instilled into us against the English, I soon got acquainted with the officers of the ship, who were highly amused by my ignorance of their language and of nautical matters, and took the more pains to instruct me in both, because the admiral treated me as his son. Still a profound sadness came over me when I beheld at a distance the white coasts of Normandy, and I retired that I might not weep. I repressed my tears, difficult as I found it to do so, for I was young and courageous; but afterwards, as soon as my will ceased to control my heart, as soon as I was a-bed and asleep, the tears trickled from my eyes in spite of me, and made my pillow so wet as to awaken me.

One night in particular — there had been a

new prize made of a French brig; I had seen her founder at a distance, without the possibility of saving a single man of the crew; and, notwithstanding the gravity and the self-restraint of the officers, I could not help hearing the shouts and the huzzas of the seamen who saw with joy the expedition melting away, and the sea swallowing, drop by drop, that avalanche which had threatened to crush their country. I had retired and shut myself up all day in the little room which had been fitted up for me by Admiral Collingwood's order, near his own cabin, as if the more expressly to proclaim his protection; and, when night came on, I went by myself upon deck. I had felt the enemy about me more than ever, and I began to reflect on my career, so soon stopped short, with extreme bitterness.

I had already been for a month a prisoner of war; and the Admiral, who in public treated me with such kindness, had spoken to me but for a moment in private, on the first day of my coming on board. He was mild but cold, and in his manners, as well as in those of the English officers, there was a point at which familiar intercourse ceased, and where studied politeness interposed as a barrier to every path. It is this which makes you feel that you are

living in a foreign country. I was seized with a sort of terror, on considering that this state of exclusion might last till the end of the war, and I regarded as inevitable the sacrifice of my youth, wasted in the inglorious uselessness of the prisoner.

The ship, with all sails bent, was going at a great rate, though I could not feel her move. My hands rested upon a rope, and my head upon both my hands, and, thus bending down, I fixed my eyes on the water. Its green and sombre depths gave me a sort of dizziness, and the silence of night was interrupted by none but English cries. I hoped for a moment that the ship was carrying me far away from France, and that next morning I should not behold those steep white cliffs cut out of the beloved soil of my poor country. I thought that I should thus be delivered from the perpetual hankering produced within me by that sight, and at least be spared the torment of not being able to think of escaping without dishonour — a torment equal to that of Tantalus, under which a burning thirst of country must consume me for I knew not how long.

I was oppressed by my solitude, and wished for a speedy occasion to put myself in the way

of being killed. I pondered upon composing my death cleverly, and in the grand and grave manner of the ancients. I devised an heroic end, worthy of those which had been the subject of so many conversations among pages and juvenile warriors, the object of such envy among my companions. I was in one of those reveries which, at eighteen, resemble a continuation of action and combat rather than a serious meditation, when I felt a gentle pull at my arm, and, on turning my head, saw standing behind me the good Admiral Collingwood.

He had in his hand his night-telescope, and he was dressed in full uniform, with rigid English precision. He put one hand upon my shoulder in a fatherly manner, and I remarked a look of deep melancholy in his large dark eyes and on his brow. His white, half-powdered hair fell carelessly over his ears, and there was, together with the unalterable calmness of his voice and manner, a deep sadness which particularly struck me on that night, and at once excited in me increased respect and attention.

"Fretting already, my boy?" said he — "I have some little things to say to you. Will you come and chat with me a while?"

I stammered forth a few incoherent words of

politeness and thanks, in which there was probably not even common sense, for he took no notice of them, and seated himself on a bench, holding me by the hand. I was standing before him.

"You have been a prisoner but a month," he resumed, "and I have been so for thirty-three years. Yes, my friend, I am a prisoner to the sea; it confines me on every side; waves, nothing but waves: I see nothing else, I hear nothing else. My hair has grown gray amidst their foam, and my back become somewhat bent already under their spray. I have spent so little time in England that I know it only by the map. My country is an ideal being, which I have merely had a glimpse of, but which I serve like a slave, and which treats me with the more severity the more need it has of me. It is the common lot; nay, what we ought most to wish is to have such chains, but sometimes they are very heavy."

He paused for a moment, and we were both silent, for I durst not utter a word, perceiving that he meant to continue.

"I have maturely considered," said he, "and I have questioned myself as to my duty while I have you on board with me. I might have

sent you to England, but then you might have been plunged into a distress from which I will always protect you, and into a despair from which too I hope to save you. I had a real friendship for your father, and I will here give him a proof of it: if he sees us, he will be satisfied with me; don't you think so?"

The Admiral again paused, and pressed my hand. He even drew nearer, and looked closely at me, to discover the effect produced upon me by what he was saying. But I was too much confounded to make any reply. He proceeded more rapidly.

"I have already written to the Admiralty, recommending that, on the first exchange of prisoners, you should be sent back to France. But," he added, "I frankly own to you that it may be a long time before this takes place; for, not only does Bonaparte throw obstacles in the way, but very few prisoners are taken from us. Meanwhile, I must tell you, that I should be pleased to see you learn the language of your enemies; you see that we understand your's. If you like, we will study together, and I will lend you Shakspeare and Cook's Voyages. Keep up your spirits; you will be free before me; for, if the Emperor does not make peace, I must end my days at sea."

This tone of kindness by which he associated himself with me, and made us comrades in his floating prison, caused me to feel for him. I comprehended that, in this sacrificed and secluded life, he was impelled to do good as a secret consolation for the harshness of his wholly warring mission.

"Sir," said I, "before you teach me the words of a new language, acquaint me with the thoughts by which you have attained this perfect serenity, this equality of mind, which resembles happiness, and which disguises an everlasting *ennui* . . . . Forgive what I am going to say, but I fear that this virtue is but a perpetual dissimulation."

"You are very much mistaken," said he; "the sentiment of duty acquires at last such sway over the mind, that it enters into the character and becomes one of its principal features, just as wholesome food, perpetually taken, can change the mass of the blood, and become one of the principles of our constitution. I have learned from experience, better perhaps than any man, how extremely easy it is to arrive at complete forgetfulness of self. But we cannot put off the man entirely, and there are things that keep firmer hold of the heart than we could wish."

Here he once more paused, and raised his long telescope. He placed it on my shoulder, to look at a distant light that was gliding along the horizon; and, perceiving in a moment, from the motion, what it was, "Fishing-boats," said he, and he seated himself by me on the ship's side. I saw that he had, for a long time, something to say, which he hesitated to begin upon.

"You never talk to me about your father," said he, all at once. "I am surprised that you have no questions to ask me concerning him, that you have not wanted to know something about his illness, about what he said, about his last wishes."

And, as the night was very light, I perceived that I was still closely watched by his large dark eyes.

"I was afraid of being indiscreet," said I, with embarrassment.

He squeezed my arm, as if to prevent me from proceeding.

"It is not that, my child; it is not that:" and he shook his head doubtingly, but with a look of kindness.

"I have had few opportunities of speaking to you."

"Still less is that it," said he, interrupting

me. "You might have talked to me on that subject any day, if you had pleased."

I remarked agitation and somewhat of reproach in his accent. This was what he had upon his heart. I bethought me of another silly answer to justify myself; for nothing makes one look so foolish as bad excuses.

"Sir," said I, "the humiliating sense of captivity engrosses more than you can imagine." And I remember that, in uttering these words, I strove to assume an air of dignity and a Regulus look, calculated to produce an effect upon him.

"Ah, poor fellow! poor boy!" he exclaimed, "you don't stick to the truth. Search your heart, and you will there find an indifference for which you are not accountable, but probably the military profession of your poor father."

He had opened the way to Truth, and I let her take it.

"It is certain," said I, "that I knew very little of my father; I had scarcely seen him more than once, at Malta."

"That is the truth!" cried he. "There lies the cruelty! my friend. My two daughters will some day say the same. They will say: '*We knew very little of our father!*' Sarah and Mary will say this! And yet I love them with a heart

warm and tender. I educate them, though at this distance; I watch over them from my ship; I write to them every day; I direct their reading, their studies; I send them ideas and sentiments; I receive their childish communications in return; I scold them; I make it up with them; I know all that they do; I know what day they have been at church in too smart dresses. I give their mother continual instructions for them; I foresee who will be their lovers, who will solicit their hands, who will marry them; their husbands will be my sons; I am bringing them up to be simple and pious women — is it possible to be more the father than I am? .... Well! this is all nothing, because they do not see me."

He uttered the concluding words with tremulous voice, evidently akin to tears .... After a moment's silence, he continued.

"Yes, Sarah never sat on my knee since she was two years old, and I never had Mary in my arms but before her eyes were yet opened. Yes, it cannot be otherwise than that you should have been indifferent towards your father, and that they should some day grow so towards me. One does not love an invisible parent. What is their father to them? a daily letter—a piece of ad-

vice, more or less cold. One does not love a piece of advice, one loves a being—and a being that one never sees might as well not exist—one does not love it—and, when it dies, it is not more absent than it was before—and one does not weep for it!"

His voice was choked, and he stopped. Unwilling to enter farther into that painful feeling before a stranger, he retired and paced the deck for some time. I was, at first, deeply moved at this sight; he awakened in me a remorse for not having known the value of a father, and to this conversation I owed the first tender, natural, sacred emotion, that my heart ever experienced. From that deep regret, from that insurmountable sadness, amidst the brightest military renown, I became sensible how much I had lost in never having known the love of home, which could give such cutting pangs to a great heart; I comprehended how much there was factitious in our brutal and barbarous education, in our insatiable eagerness for stunning action; I saw, as by a sudden revelation of the heart, that there was an adorable life, a life to be regretted, from which I had been violently torn, a genuine life of paternal love, in exchange for which there was made up for us a false life, entirely composed

of hatred and all sorts of puerile vanities; I comprehended that there was but one more sacred thing than family, and to which a man may holily sacrifice himself, namely, that other family —his country. And while the brave old Admiral, retiring from me, wept because he was good, I buried my face in both my hands, and wept, because I had hitherto been so bad.

In a few minutes, the Admiral came back to me. "I have to tell you," he began again, in a firmer tone, "that we shall very soon be off the French coast. I am an everlasting sentinel placed before your ports. I have but one word to add, and I wished it to be said between our two selves: Bear in mind that you are here upon parole, and that I shall not watch you; but, my child, the longer you are with us the harder will be the trial. You are yet very young; if the temptation becomes too strong for your fortitude to withstand, come to me when you are afraid that it will get the better of you; don't shun me, and I will save you from a dishonourable action, which, unfortunately for their names, some officers have committed. Remember that a man is justified in breaking a galley-slave's chain, but not his word of honour." And with the con-

cluding words he shook me by the hand and left me.

I know not, sir, if you have remarked, in the course of your life, that the revolutions which are effected in our souls depend frequently on a day, an hour, a memorable and unexpected conversation, which shakes us, and sows, as it were, fresh seed in our hearts, which grows up slowly, and of which the rest of our actions are merely the consequence and the natural development. Such were to me the morning at Fontainebleau and the night on board the English ship. Admiral Collingwood left me to sustain a fresh combat.

What in me had been but extreme weariness of captivity and an unbounded and juvenile impatience to act, became an irrepressible longing after my country. On seeing what grief was slowly undermining a man perpetually separated from his native land, I felt a strong impulse to know and to adore mine; I fancied myself bound by ties of affection, which, in fact, had no existence; I imagined myself a member of a family, and began to dream of relatives whom I had scarcely known, and whom I reproached myself for not having sufficiently loved, while they, accustomed to consider me as nobody,

lived in their coldness and their egotism perfectly indifferent to my forlorn and misdirected existence.

Thus good itself turned to evil in me; thus the prudent counsel which the brave Admiral had deemed it his duty to give me, he had delivered entirely encompassed with an emotion which was his own and which spoke louder than he; his tremulous voice had touched me more than the wisdom of his words; and, while he meant to tighten my chain, he had more strongly excited within me the irresistible desire to break it.

Such is almost always the case with advice, whether written or oral. Experience and the reasoning which results from our own reflexions can alone instruct us. Only observe, you who dabble in them, the inutility of the belles lettres! What good do you effect? whom do you convert? and by whom are you ever understood, I should like to know? You almost always represent the contrary cause to that which you are pleading as triumphant. For example, there is one of you who extols Clarissa as the finest possible epic poem on the virtue of woman — what is the consequence? Readers take the opposite side, and bestow all their interest

on Lovelace, whom she nevertheless blasts with her virgin splendour, which rape itself has not tarnished; on Lovelace, who in vain flings himself upon his knees to implore forgiveness of his holy victim, and cannot bend that soul which the fall of her body has left unsullied. In such lessons every thing turns out wrong. All that you do is to rouse the vices which, proud that you paint them, come to look at their figures in your picture, and find themselves beautiful.

It is true that you care little about this, but my good and simple Collingwood had conceived a real friendship for me, and my conduct was not indifferent to him. Hence it gave him great pleasure to see me engaged in serious and persevering study. In my habitual silence and reserve he also found something that sympathized with English gravity; and he acquired a habit of opening his mind to me on many an occasion, and of communicating to me matters that were not unimportant. After some time I was considered as his secretary and his kinsman, and I spoke English well enough not to appear too much the foreigner.

It was, nevertheless, a cruel life that I led, and the melancholy days at sea seemed very tedious to me. For whole years, we never

ceased hovering about the coast of France, and I continually saw at the horizon the outline of the coast of that country which Grotius called the fairest kingdom next to that of heaven. We then went off to sea again, and, for months together, I saw nothing around me but fogs and mountains of water. Whenever a ship passed us, whether near or at a distance, she was sure to be English; no other had permission to spread her sails to the breeze, and Ocean heard not a word that was not English. The English themselves felt sad on this account, and complained that the Ocean had now become a desert where they met with none but their own countrymen, and Europe a fortress that was closed against them.

Sometimes my wooden prison approached so near to the land, that I could distinguish men and boys walking upon the shore. My heart at such times would throb vehemently, and inward rage seized me with such violence that I would go down below lest I should yield to the temptation to throw myself overboard in order to swim to land: but when I returned to the indefatigable Collingwood, I was ashamed of my boyish weakness; and I could not help admiring how he combined so active a courage with such profound sadness.

That man who, for forty years, had known nothing but war and the sea, never ceased studying both as an inexhaustible science. When one ship was weary he went on board another; like an unmerciful rider, he wore them all out and killed them under him. He wearied seven while I was with him. He passed his nights, completely dressed, seated upon his guns, incessantly engaged in calculating the art of keeping his ship motionless, like a sentinel, on the same spot, without being at anchor, and in spite of wind and storm. He was continually exercising his crews and watching over them and for them. Then, going down to his cabin, he again became the father, and wrote to desire that his daughters might not be made fine ladies, or allowed to read novels, "but history, travels, essays, and Shakspeare's plays as often as they pleased." After the battle of Trafalgar, which I had the mortification to see him gain, and the plan of which he had formed with his friend Nelson, whom he succeeded, he wrote to his wife: "I hardly know how we shall be able to support the dignity to which his Majesty has been pleased to raise me. Let others plead for pensions; I can be rich without money, by endeavouring to be superior to every thing poor.

I would have my services to my country unstained by any interested motive."

Sometimes, when he felt his health declining, he solicited indulgence from England; but the inexorable one replied, "Stay at sea," and sent him a distinction, a dignity, a gold medal, for every glorious achievement: his bosom was covered with them. Again he wrote: "I have only been ten days in port since I left England . . . . . I shall never have any good prospect till I can get my darlings about me, and then, perhaps, I shall be almost blind, and not able to see them . . . . I am very sorry that, with such a list as we have, there should be thought to be any difficulty in finding a successor of superior ability to me." England replied: "You must remain at sea, always at sea." And there he did remain till his death.

This Roman life touched me, and commanded my reverence, when I had contemplated it for but a single day. I felt a great contempt for myself—I, who was nobody as citizen, nobody as father, as son, as brother, as family man, or as public man, to complain when he never complained! He had only once afforded, in spite of himself, a glimpse of his real feelings, and I, a useless boy, an emmet among the emmets whom

the sultan of France trampled under foot, I reproached myself for my secret desire to return and to give myself up to the hazard of his caprices, and to become again one of the atoms of that dust which he kneaded up with blood!

The sight of this genuine citizen, devoted, not as I had been, to a man, but to his country and to duty, was a fortunate circumstance for me; for I learned in this severe school what is that true greatness which we ought henceforward to seek in arms, how much, when thus understood, it exalts our profession above all others, and how it can leave the memory of some of us worthy of admiration, whatever may be the destiny of war and armies.

Never did man possess in a higher degree that inward peace which springs from the sentiment of sacred duty, and the modest carelessness of the warrior to whom it is of little consequence whether his name be celebrated, provided that the common weal prospers. I saw him write one day:—"What my heart is most bent on is the glory of my country. To stand a barrier between the ambition of France, and the independence of England, is the first wish of my life; and in my death I would rather that my body should be added to the rampart, than

trailed in useless pomp through an idle throng . . . My best service is due to my country as long as I live . . . . Pray do not talk about the wound in my leg, or people may think that I am vapouring about my dangers."

His sadness was profound, but full of grandeur; it was no impediment to his incessant activity, and he furnished me with the standard of what the intelligent warrior ought to be, practising the *art of war*, not as an ambitious man, but as an artist, looking at it from above, and often despising it, like that Montecuculli, who, when Turenne was killed, retired, not deigning to continue the game with an ordinary player. But I was still too young to comprehend all the merits of this character, and what took the strongest hold of me was the ambition to gain in my own country a rank equal to his. When I saw the kings of the South soliciting his protection, and Napoleon himself exulting in the hope that Collingwood was in the Indian Seas, I even went so far as to wish most ardently for an opportunity to escape, and in such haste was I to comply with the suggestions of the ambition which I still cherished, that I was on the point of violating my promise. Yes, so low as that had I fallen!

One day, the Ocean, on board which we were, put into Gibraltar. I went on shore with the Admiral, and, walking by myself through the town, I met a French officer belonging to the 7th Hussars, who had been taken prisoner in Spain and carried to Gibraltar, with four of his comrades. They had the town for their prison, but they were closely watched. I had been acquainted with this officer in France. We were both pleased at our meeting, being nearly in the same situation. It was so long since I had heard a Frenchman speak French, that I thought him eloquent, though he was a thoroughly stupid fellow, and we had been together scarcely a quarter of an hour before we had opened our minds to one another concerning our position. He frankly told me at once that he intended to escape with his comrades; that they had found an excellent opportunity, and he should not let them ask him twice to accompany them. He strongly urged me to do the like. I told him that he was very lucky in being watched, but that I, who was not, could not attempt to escape without dishonour; and that he, his companions, and myself, were not in the same predicament. This reasoning appeared to him too subtile.

"I am no casuist, faith!" said he, "and, if you choose, I 'll send you a bishop to give you his opinion of the matter. Were I in your place, I should start. I see but two things —being free and not being so. Recollect that you have lost your promotion for the five years that you have been confined in those English stocks. The lieutenants of your standing are already colonels."

His companions thereupon joined us, and made me go with them to a house of very equivocal appearance, where they called for sherry, and there they mentioned so many captains who had become generals, and sub-lieutenants promoted to viceroys, that my brain turned, and I promised to meet them at the same place at twelve o'clock on the third night from that time. A little boat belonging to some honest smugglers was to be in readiness there, and to carry us on board a French ship that had come to take the wounded of our army to Toulon. The scheme appeared to me an admirable one, and my jovial companions, having made me drink a good many bumpers to drown the qualms of conscience, concluded their persuasions with a victorious argument, swearing by their heads that though it was indeed but right to entertain

some regard for an honest man who had treated one well, yet every thing confirmed them in the certainty that the English were not men.

I returned very thoughtful on board the Ocean, and when I had slept and saw my position clearly on awaking, I asked myself if my countrymen had not been making game of me. Still the desire of liberty, and an ambition keen and excited ever since my boyhood, urged me to escape, in spite of the shame which I felt to violate my oath. I passed the whole day with the Admiral, without daring to look him in the face, and I strove to think him little.

At dinner, I spoke loudly and arrogantly of the greatness of Napoleon; I warmed as I proceeded; I extolled his universal genius, which instinctively divined laws in making codes, and the future in making events. I insisted with insolence on the superiority of this genius, compared with the slender talent of men of tactics and manœuvres.

I hoped to be contradicted; but, contrary to my expectation, I found in the English officers even greater admiration for the Emperor than I could myself show for their implacable enemy. Lord Collingwood, in particular, flinging off his melancholy silence and his habitual pensiveness,

praised him in terms so just, so energetic, so precise, expatiating to his officers on the extraordinary foresight of the Emperor, the magic celerity of his execution, the firmness of his orders, the certainty of his judgment, his penetration in negociations, the shrewdness of his ideas in council, his greatness in battle, his calmness in danger, his perseverance in the preparation of his enterprizes, his pride in the attitude that he had given to France, and, in short, on all the qualities which compose the great man, that I asked myself what History could ever add to this panegyric; and I was mortified, because I had sought to incense myself against him, hoping to hear him launch out into unjust accusations.

I had secretly and maliciously wished that he might contradict me, and that some inconsiderate or derogatory expression on his part might serve as a justification of the dishonourable act which I meditated. But it appeared as if he made a point, on the contrary, of redoubling his kindness; and, his marked attention causing the rest of the company to suppose that I had experienced some new affliction, under which it was right to soothe me, they were all more friendly and more indulgent to

me than ever. I was vexed at this, and left the table.

Next day, unfortunately for me, the Admiral took me again to Gibraltar. We were to spend a week there. The night fixed for escape arrived. My brain boiled, and I was still undecided. I assigned specious motives to myself, and wilfully shut my eyes to their falsehood. A violent conflict took place within me; but, while my soul was twisting and writhing in agony, my body, as though it had been arbiter between ambition and honour, struck by itself alone into the track of flight. I had, without being myself aware of it, made a bundle of my things, and I was just going from the house where we were staying in Gibraltar to that of our rendezvous, when I suddenly stopped short. I felt that it was impossible for me to proceed.

In dishonourable actions there is something poisonous that is perceived by a man of a good heart, the moment his lips touch the edge of the cup of perdition; nay, he cannot so much as taste it without being ready to die. When I saw what I was about, and that I was going to forfeit my word, I was seized with such horror that I thought I must be mad. I ran along the shore, and fled from the fatal house as from a

plague-hospital, without daring to turn round or to look back. I threw myself into the water and swam off, dark as it was, to our ship, the Ocean, my floating prison. Seizing her cable, I clambered into her; and, when I was upon deck, I clasped the main-mast and clung to it as to an asylum that saved me from dishonour; and, at the same moment, the feeling of the magnitude of my sacrifice rending my heart, I sank upon my knees, and, leaning my head against the iron hoops that encircled the mast, I burst into tears and wept like a child.

The captain of the Ocean, seeing me in this state, and believing, or feigning to believe, that I was ill, ordered me to be carried to my cabin. I earnestly besought him to place a sentinel at my door to prevent me from leaving it. They locked me up, and I breathed more freely, delivered at length from the torture of being my own gaoler. Next morning, when it was light, I perceived that we were out at sea, and I became somewhat more composed on losing sight of land, the object of every unhappy temptation in my condition. I began to think of it with more resignation, when my little door opened, and the good Admiral entered alone.

"I am come to bid you adieu," he began, with

a less serious look than usual. "You start for France to-morrow morning."

"Gracious Heaven! is it to try me that you tell me this, my lord?"

"That would be a very cruel experiment, my boy," replied he. "I have already done you a very grievous wrong. I ought to have left you in prison in the Northumberland, and released you from your parole. You might then have conspired without remorse against your keepers, and exerted without scruple all your skill to effect your escape. Enjoying more liberty, you have suffered more; but, thank God! you yesterday withstood the temptation to commit an act that would have dishonoured you. It would have been absolutely foundering in port, for I had been a fortnight negociating your exchange, which Admiral Rosilly has just settled. I have trembled for you; for I was acquainted with the scheme of your countrymen. I suffered them to escape for your sake, for fear that in stopping them you might be stopped. And how could we have contrived to keep such a thing secret? You would have been ruined, my child, and, believe me, ill received by Napoleon's old brave officers. They have a right to be difficult in regard to honour."

I was so agitated that I was unable to thank him. He perceived my embarrassment, and, cutting short the wretched phrases in which I was endeavouring to stammer out a declaration that I was sorry to leave him, "Come, come," said he, "no French compliments, as we call them: we are satisfied with one another—that is all; and you have, I think, a proverb which says, 'There is no such thing as an agreeable prison.' Leave me to die in mine, my friend; I have got used to it, for my part; indeed, I could do no other. But this will not last much longer; I find myself falling away, and my legs tottering under me. For the fourth time, I have begged a little rest of Lord Mulgrave, and he has again refused it me: he writes that he knows not how to supply my place. When I am gone, however, he must find me a successor, and it would not be amiss if he were to look out. I shall remain on duty in the Mediterranean; but you, my child, lose no time. Yonder is a sloop that is to take you. I have but one thing to recommend to you; that is, to devote yourself to a principle rather than to a man. The love of your country is one great enough to fill a whole heart, and to occupy all the faculties of the mind."

"Alas! my lord," said I, "there are times when one cannot easily ascertain what the country wishes. At any rate, I will go and ask mine."

Once more we bade each other adieu, and, with a heavy heart, I parted from that worthy man, of whose death I was apprized shortly afterwards. He died at sea, as he had lived for forty-nine years, without complaining, without boasting of his services, without having seen his two daughters again — solitary and sad, as one of those old dogs of Ossian, which are everlastingly guarding the coasts of England amid waves and fogs.

I had learned in his school all that the exiles of war can suffer, and all that the feeling of Duty can quell in a great soul. Deeply impressed by his example, and rendered more grave by my own sufferings and by the sight of his, I came to Paris to present myself, with the experience gained in my prison, to the almighty master whom I had quitted.

CHAPTER VII.

THE RECEPTION.

Here, Captain Renaud having paused, I looked at my watch. It was two o'clock. He rose, and we walked into the midst of the grenadiers. A deep silence every where prevailed. Many of them were sitting on their knapsacks and had fallen asleep. We seated ourselves a few paces off on the parapet, and, after relighting his cigar at the pipe of a soldier, he continued his narrative. There was not a house that exhibited any sign of life.

As soon as I had reached Paris, I endeavoured to see the Emperor. I soon had an opportunity at the theatre of the court, to which I was taken by one of my old comrades, who was now a colonel. It was in the Tuileries, yonder. We placed ourselves in a little box opposite to the imperial box and waited. There was as yet nobody in the theatre but the Kings. Each of

them, seated in a separate box in the first tier, had his court around him, and opposite to him, in the galleries, were his aides-de-camp and his familiar generals. The Kings of Westphalia, Saxony, and Wirtemberg, and all the princes of the confederation of the Rhine, were in the same tier. Near them, standing, talking loud and fast, was Murat, King of Naples, shaking his long black hair, like a mane, and casting lion looks around him. In the tier above were the King of Spain, and, apart and alone, the Russian ambassador, Prince Kourakin, covered with epaulettes and diamonds. The pit was crowded with generals, dukes, princes, colonels, and senators. Every place above was filled with the ladies of the court, with bare arms and shoulders.

The box surmounted by the eagle was still empty; we turned our eyes to it incessantly. In a short time, the Kings rose and remained standing. The Emperor entered his box alone, walking fast; he threw himself into an arm-chair, and looked at something straight before him with his eye-glass; then, recollecting that the whole house was standing and awaiting a look, he shook his head twice sharply and ungracefully, turned about quickly, and allowed

the Kings and Queens to seat themselves. His chamberlains, dressed in red, were standing behind him. He spoke to them without looking at them, and from time to time held out his hand for a gold snuff-box, which one of them gave him and took back again. Crescentini sang the *Horatii* with the voice of a seraph, issuing from a lean and shrivelled face. The orchestra was soft and subdued, by command of the Emperor, wishing, perhaps, like the Lacedemonians, to be rather soothed than excited by the music. He kept looking in front of him with his eye-glass, and very often towards where I sat. I recognized his large eyes, of a greenish gray, but did not like the yellow fat which had smothered his austere features. He placed his left hand upon his left eye to see better, according to his custom; I perceived that he had recognized me. He turned about sharply, took no notice of any thing but the stage, and presently retired. I was already in waiting for him. He walked fast along the corridor, and, from his thick legs, squeezed into white silk stockings, and his bloated figure in his green dress, I should scarcely have known him again. He stopped short before me, and, speaking to the colonel, who presented me, instead of addressing

himself direct to me, "Why," said he, "have I never seen any thing of him! Still a lieutenant!"

"He has been a prisoner ever since 1804."

"Why did he not make his escape?"

"I was on parole," said I, in an under-tone.

"I don't like prisoners!—the fellows ought to get killed!" said he, turning his back upon me.

We remained motionless in file, and when the whole of his suite had passed: "My dear fellow," said the colonel, "don't you see plainly that you are a fool? You have lost your promotion, and nobody thinks the better of you for it."

CHAPTER VIII.

THE RUSSIAN CORPS-DE-GARDE.

"Is it possible?" said I, stamping on the ground. "When I hear such stories, I rejoice that the officer has been dead within me for several years. Nothing is left but the solitary and independent writer, who watches to see what is becoming of his liberty, and will not defend it against his old friends."

And I fancied that I could perceive in Captain Renaud traces of indignation at the recollection of the circumstances that he was relating to me. Be this as it may, he smiled with a placid and contented look, and thus proceeded.

It was perfectly natural. This colonel was the best fellow in the world; but there are people who, according to the celebrated expression, are braggarts of crime and unfeelingness. He thought he would insult me, because the Emperor had set the example—gross flattery of the corps-de-garde.

But how fortunate was this for me! From that day I began to have an inward esteem for myself, to have confidence in myself, to feel my character purified, formed, completed, strengthened. From that day, I saw clearly that events are nothing, that the inward man is every thing; I placed myself far above my judges. In short, I felt that I had a conscience; I resolved to be guided entirely by that, to consider public opinions, signal rewards, rapid fortunes, bulletin reputations, as ridiculous quackeries, as a game of chance, not worth bestowing attention upon.

I lost no time in joining the army, in plunging into unknown ranks, the infantry of the line, the infantry of battle, where the peasants of the army were mowed down by a thousand at a time, as regular and as equal as the swathes in one of the rich meadows of Beauce. There I buried myself, like a Carthusian in his cloister; and, amidst this armed multitude, marching on foot like the common soldiers, carrying a knapsack, and eating their bread, I was in all the great wars of the Empire, so long as the Empire lasted. Ah! if you did but know how easy I felt under those unparalleled fatigues! How fond I was of that obscurity, and what wild joys

great battles imparted to me! The beauty of war is amidst the soldiers, in the camp life, in the mud of marches and of the bivouac. I revenged myself on Bonaparte by serving my country, without receiving any thing from Napoleon, and, when he passed before my regiment, I hid myself for fear of a favour. Experience had taught me to appreciate dignities and power at their proper value.

I now aspired to nothing more than to take in each conquest of our arms that portion of pride which belonged to me, according to my own feeling. I resolved to be a citizen wherever it was permitted to be so, and in my own way. Sometimes my services passed unnoticed, at others they were extolled beyond their deserts, while I never ceased to keep them in the dark as much as lay in my power, dreading nothing more than that my name should be too conspicuous. The multitude of those who follow a contrary course is so great, that obscurity was easy to me, and that I was still but lieutenant in the Imperial Guard in 1814, when I received this wound which you see on my forehead, and which to-night is more painful than usual.

Here Captain Renaud passed his hand several times over his brow, and, as he seemed disposed to be silent, I entreated him to proceed with such urgency that he complied. He rested his head on that of his bamboo cane.

That is singular enough, said he, I never related the whole of that story, and to-night I have a good mind to do so. — Pshaw! never mind! I like to unbosom myself to an old comrade. It will furnish you with a subject for serious reflexions, when you have nothing better to do. To me it appears not unworthy of them. You will think me either very weak or very mad; but I don't care. Till the event, very commonplace for some, which I am going to relate to you, and the account of which I am putting off in spite of myself, because it pains me, my love of military glory had become discreet, grave, devoted, and perfectly pure as is the simple and unique sentiment of Duty; but from that day other ideas came to throw additional gloom over my life.

It was in 1814; it was the beginning of the year and the end of that dismal war, in which our poor army defended the Empire and the Emperor, while France looked on with dismay.

Soissons had just surrendered to Bulow, the Prussian. The armies of Silesia and the North had there formed their junction. Macdonald had left Troyes, and abandoned the basin of the Yonne to establish his line of defence from Nogent to Montereau with thirty thousand men.

We were to attack Rheims, which the Emperor wished to recover. The weather was gloomy and the rain incessant. We had just lost a superior officer, who was escorting prisoners. The Russians had surprised and killed him in the preceding night, and delivered their comrades. Our colonel, who was what is called *a tough one to cook*, resolved to have his revenge. We were near Epernay, and were turning the heights that surround it. Evening came, and, after taking the whole day to refit, we were passing a very pretty white mansion with turrets, called Boursault, when the colonel called me. He took me aside, while arms were piled, and said to me with his old croaking voice:

"You see that barn up yonder on that peaked hill? there where yon great booby of a Russian sentinel, with his bishop's cap, is walking to and fro?"

"Yes," said I, "I see distinctly both the barn and the grenadier."

"Well, you, who are an old hand, must know that that is the point which the Russians took the day before yesterday, and which the Emperor is particularly anxious about just now. He says that it is the key to Rheims, and so it may be, for aught I know. At any rate, we shall play Woronzow a trick. At eleven to-night, you will take two hundred of your boys and surprise the corps-de-garde which they have established in that barn. But you must carry it with the bayonet, for fear of giving an alarm."

He took, and offered to me, a pinch of snuff; and, throwing away the rest by little and little, as I may do now, he said to me, uttering a few words as he sprinkled each dust in the breeze:

"You may be sure that I shall be behind you with my column. . . . You will not have lost more than sixty men . . . . You will have the six pieces that they have placed there . . . . You will turn them on the side next Rheims . . . . By eleven o'clock . . . . half-past eleven . . . . the position will be our's. And then we will lie down till three, to rest ourselves awhile . . . . from the little affair at Craonne, which was no ball-play, as the saying is."

"That's enough," said I to him, and away I went with my second lieutenant, to make some

preparations for our expedition. The essential point, as you see, was not to make a noise. I ordered the arms to be examined, and the cartridges to be drawn from all those that were charged. I then walked about for some time with my sergeants, waiting for the hour of starting. At half-past ten, I ordered them to put on their great coats over their uniform, and to cover their muskets with their great coats; for, whatever you may be about, as you see to-night, the bayonet always shows itself; and, though the night was a great deal darker than this, I would not trust entirely to that. I had taken especial notice of the paths, bordered by hedges, leading to the Russian corps-de-garde, and I picked out for the job the most resolute fellows I ever commanded. Yonder, in the ranks, are two of them who were there, and recollect the affair well. They had got used to the Russians, and knew how to deal with them. The scouts whom we fell in with as we ascended were put out of the way without noise, like reeds that you lay down upon the ground with your hand. The sentry posted before the guns required more precaution. He was standing still, with grounded arms, his chin propped upon his piece; the poor devil rocked like a man dropping to sleep from fatigue

and ready to fall. One of my grenadiers clasped him in his arms, and squeezed him till he was almost stifled; while two others, having gagged him, threw him into the bushes.

I came up slowly, and I could not, I must confess, get the better of a certain emotion which I had never felt at the moment of other encounters. It was shame for attacking men who were asleep. I saw them wrapped in their cloaks, lighted by a close lantern, and my heart throbbed violently. But all at once, at the moment of acting, I feared that it was a weakness very like that of cowards. I was afraid that I had for once felt fear, and, taking my sword which had been concealed under my arm, I briskly entered first, setting the example to my grenadiers. I made a motion to them which they comprehended; they fell first upon the guns, then upon the men, like wolves upon a flock of sheep. Oh! it was a dismal, a horrible butchery! The bayonet pierced, the butt-end smashed, the knee stifled, the hand strangled. All cries were extinguished, almost before they were uttered, beneath the feet of our soldiers; and not a head was raised without receiving the mortal blow.

On entering, I had struck at random a terrible stroke at something black, which I had run

through and through. An old officer, a tall stout man, whose head was covered with white hair, sprung upon his feet like a phantom, made a violent lunge at my face with a sword, and instantly dropped dead, pierced by the bayonets! On my part, I fell beside him, stunned by the blow, which had struck me between the eyes, and I heard beneath me the tender and dying voice of a boy, saying, "Papa!"

I then comprehended what I had done, and I looked at my work with frantic eagerness. I saw one of those officers of fourteen, so numerous in the Russian armies which invaded us at that period, and who were dragged away to this awful school. His long curling hair fell upon his bosom as fair, as silken, as that of a woman; and his head was bowed, as though he had but fallen asleep a second time. His rosy lips, expanded like those of a new-born infant, seemed to be yet moist with the nurse's milk; and his large blue eyes, half open, had a beauty of form that was fond and feminine. I lifted him upon one arm, and his cheek fell against mine, dripping with blood, as though he were burying his face in his mother's bosom to warm it again. He seemed to shrink from me, and to crouch close to the ground, in order to get away from

his murderers. Filial affection and the confidence and repose of a delicious sleep pervaded his lifeless face, and he seemed to say to me: "Let us sleep in peace!"

"Was this an enemy?" I exclaimed. And that paternal feeling which God has put into the bowels of every man leaped and thrilled within me. I clasped him to my bosom, when I felt that I was pressing against it the hilt of my sword, which had pierced his heart and killed this sleeping cherub. I would have stooped my head to his, but my blood covered him with large stains; I felt the wound on my forehead, and recollected that it had been given by his father. I looked around, with an emotion of shame, and saw nothing but a heap of dead bodies, which my grenadiers were dragging off by the heels and throwing outside, taking nothing from them but their cartridges.

At this moment the Colonel entered, followed by his column, whose step and arms I heard.

"Bravo, my dear fellow!" said he, "you've done that job cleverly. But you are wounded!"

"Look there!" said I — "what difference is there between me and a murderer?"

"Eh! *Sacre-dieu!* comrade, what would you have? 'Tis our trade."

"Precisely so," I replied; and I rose to resume my command. The boy fell back into the folds of his cloak, in which I wrapped him, and his hand dropped a bamboo cane, which fell upon my hand, as if he had given it to me. I took it, resolving, whatever dangers I might have to encounter in future, to have no other weapon, and I had not courage to draw my slaughtering sword out of his bosom.

I hastily quitted that den which stank of blood, and, when I was in the open air, I felt strong enough to wipe the gore from my bleeding brow. My grenadiers were in their ranks; each was coolly wiping his bayonet on the greensward, and fastening the flint in the lock of his piece. My sergeant-major, followed by the quarter-master, walked before the ranks, holding his list in his hand; and, reading it by the light of a candle's end stuck in the barrel of his musket, he calmly called over the names. I sat down, meanwhile, at the foot of a tree, and the surgeon came and bound up my wound. A heavy March shower fell upon my head, and somewhat refreshed me. I could not help heaving a deep sigh. "I am tired of war!" I said to the surgeon.

"So am I," said a grave voice, which I knew.

I pushed the bandage from over my eyes, and saw, not Napoleon the Emperor, but Bonaparte the Soldier. He was alone, dejected, on foot, standing before me, his boots sunk in the mud, his coat torn, the rain dripping from the brim of his hat: he felt that his last days were come, and around him he beheld his last soldiers.

He looked at me stedfastly. "I have seen thee somewhere, grumbler," said he.

From the concluding word, I perceived that it was merely a familiar phrase which he had employed. I knew that I had grown older in look than in years and in fatigues; moustaches and wounds disguised me sufficiently.

"I have seen you every where, without being seen," I replied.

"Do'st thou wish for promotion?"

"It is full late," said I.

He crossed his arms for a moment without answering. "Thou art right," he then said; "in three days we shall both of us quit the service."

He turned his back on me and remounted his horse, held for him at the distance of a few paces. At this moment our *tête de colonne* had attacked, and the enemy was firing bombs at us. One of them fell before my company, and some

of the men started back in the first moment of alarm, of which they were afterwards ashamed. Bonaparte advanced alone towards the bomb, which burned and smoked at his horse's feet, and made him snuff up the smoke. All continued silent and motionless; the bomb burst and hurt nobody. The grenadiers felt the terrible lesson that he gave them, while I felt that in this conduct there was something besides which bordered on despair. France was forsaking him, and for a moment he had doubted the attachment of his brave veterans. I deemed myself too signally avenged, and him too severely punished by so complete a desertion. I rose with effort, and, approaching him, grasped and pressed the hand that he offered to several of us. He did not recognize me, but it was for me a tacit reconciliation between the most obscure and the most illustrious man of our age. The drums beat a charge, and, at daybreak, Rheims was re-taken by us. But, a few days afterwards, Paris was in possession of the Allies.

Having concluded his narrative, Captain Renaud kept silence for a considerable time, and remained with his head bowed, while I abstained from interrupting his reverie. I considered this

brave man with veneration, and, while he spoke, I had attentively followed the slow transformations of that excellent and simple spirit, always repulsed in its expansive donations of itself, always crushed by an invincible ascendency, but which had at last found repose in the humblest and the most austere Duty.

His unknown life appeared to furnish an inward spectacle not less beautiful than the brilliant life of any man of action whatever. Each wave of the sea adds a white veil to the beauty of a pearl; each billow slowly labours to render it more perfect; each flake of foam that is rocked over it, leaves it a mysterious tint, half golden, semi-transparent; which merely indicates an inward ray, issuing from its heart: precisely so it was that this character had been formed amidst vast convulsions, and the most gloomy and perpetual trials.

I knew that, till the death of the Emperor, he had considered it as his duty not to serve, in spite of all the remonstrances of his friends, out of regard to what he called decorum; and afterwards, released from the tie of his old promise to a master who no longer knew him, he had returned to command, in the Royal Guard, the relics of his old guard; and, as he never talked

of himself, nobody had thought of him, and he had not been promoted. He cared little for this, and was accustomed to say that, unless a man could get to be general at twenty-five, an age at which the imagination may be set to work, it was better to remain merely captain, to live with the soldiers as the father of the family, as the prior of the convent.

"There," said he, after this interval of silence, "look at our old grenadier, Poirier, with his gloomy and squinting eyes, his bald head, and his scarred cheek — him whom the marshals of France stop to admire, when he presents arms to them at the King's door; look at Beccaria, with his ancient Roman profile; look at Frechou, with his white moustaches; look at that whole decorated first rank, whose sleeves have three chevrons; what would they have said, those old monks of the old army, who never would be any thing but grenadiers, if I had not been with them this morning — I who commanded them only a fortnight ago? Had I, in the course of several years, acquired domestic habits, or adopted some other profession, the case would be different; but here I have, in fact, no merit beyond their's.

"Besides," said he, "see how calm all Paris

is to-night; calm as the air," added he, rising. "Day will presently dawn. I dare say they will not begin breaking the lamps again, and to-morrow we shall return to our quarters. For my part, in a few days I shall probably have retired to a little spot of ground which I have in the country, and on which there is a little cottage, where I will finish my study of Polybius, Turenne, Folard, and Vauban, for my amusement. Almost all my comrades were killed while in the grand army, or have died since; I have long had no one to chat with, and you know in what way I came to hate war, even while carrying it on with energy."

He then shook me cordially by the hand and left me, again asking for the gorget, if I still had mine and it was not too rusty. A moment afterwards, he called me back, and said: "Stay, as it is not absolutely impossible that they may fire at us again from some window, I will beg you to keep for me this old pocket-book, full of old letters, which are interesting to me, and to me alone, and which you will burn, if we should not meet again.

"Several of our old comrades came to us, and we begged them to retire to their own homes. We do not wage civil war, not we. We are

calm as those firemen, whose duty it is to extinguish the conflagration. The parties will settle their differences afterwards — that is no concern of our's."

So saying, he left me with a smile.

CHAPTER IX.

A MARBLE.

A FORTNIGHT after this conversation, which the revolution itself had not put out of my head, I was reflecting all alone on that modest heroism and disinterestedness, both of which are so rare. I strove to forget the pure blood which had just been spilt, and was reading once more in the history of America, how in 1783 the completely victorious American army, having delivered the country and sheathed the sword, was ready to mutiny against the Congress, which, too poor to discharge its arrears of pay, was preparing to disband it. Washington, generalissimo and conqueror, had but to speak a word or to give a sign, in order to make himself Dictator: he did what he alone had the power to accomplish, he disbanded the army, and resigned his command.

I had laid down the book, and was comparing this serene greatness with our restless ambition. I was sad, and was calling to mind

all those pure martial spirits, without false lustre and without quackery, who have been fond of power and command for the public weal alone, who have held them without pride, and been incapable of either turning them against the country, or converting them into gold. I thought of all those who have waged war with a knowledge of its real worth: I thought of the excellent Collingwood, that model of resignation; and lastly, of the obscure Captain Renaud; when a man of lofty stature, in a long blue great coat, in very bad condition, entered my room. From his white moustaches, and from the scars on his copper-coloured face, I recognized in him one of the grenadiers of his company: I asked if he was still living, and the brave fellow's emotion plainly showed that some misfortune had befallen him. He sat down, and wiped his brow, and when, after a while, and after some attentions, he had recovered himself, he told me what had happened.

On the 28th and 29th of July, Captain Renaud had done nothing but march through the streets, at the head of his grenadiers, in column. He placed himself before the first section of his column, and proceeded quietly, amidst a shower of stones and musket-shot,

from coffee-houses, balconies, and windows. When he halted, it was to close his ranks, opened by those who had fallen, and to see that his guides on the left kept at proper distances. He had not drawn his sword, and marched cane in hand. His orders had at first reached him punctually; but, either from the aides de camp being killed by the way, or because the staff had not despatched any, he was left in the night, between the 28th and 29th, on the Place de la Bastile, without other instructions than to retire upon St. Cloud, and to destroy the barricades on the way. This he did without firing a shot.

On reaching the bridge of Jena, he halted, and ordered his company to be called over. He had not lost so many as any of the other companies of the Guards which had been detached, and his men were likewise less fatigued. He had contrived during those scorching days to allow them to rest at seasonable times and in the shade, and to find for them in the forsaken barracks those refreshments which were refused by the houses hostile to the troops. Such was the countenance of his column that he had found every barricade deserted, and he had had no further trouble than to cause it to be demolished.

He was, therefore, standing at the head of the bridge of Jena, covered with dust, and shaking his feet, looking towards the barrier, to see that there was nothing to obstruct the passage of his detachment, and selecting the scouts that were to be sent forward. There was nobody in the Champ de Mars but two masons, who were lying on their faces, apparently asleep, and a boy of about fourteen, running about barefoot, and snapping two bits of broken crockery like castagnets. He rattled them from time to time on the parapet of the bridge, and came, playing in this manner, to the post by which Renaud was standing.

The captain was pointing at the moment with his cane to the heights of Passy. The boy approached him, staring at him with astonished eyes, and, drawing a horse-pistol from under his waistcoat, laid hold of it with both hands, and pointed it at the captain's breast. He turned it aside with his cane, but the boy, having pulled the trigger, the ball entered the upper part of his thigh. The captain fell upon his seat without saying a word, and looked with pity at this singular enemy. He saw the boy still holding his weapon in both hands, and quite frightened at what he had done.

The grenadiers were at that moment sadly resting upon their arms; they did not deign to make a single gesture against the young rogue. Some of them lifted up their captain, others merely laid hold of the boy by the arm and led him to the officer whom he had wounded. He burst into tears, and when he saw the blood streaming from the officer's wound down his white trowsers, he was so terrified that he fainted. The captain and the boy were both carried together to a small house near Passy, where they still were.

The column, commanded by the lieutenant, had pursued its route for St. Cloud; and four grenadiers, putting off their regimentals, had remained in that hospitable house to attend to their old commanding officer. One of them—he who had called upon me—had got work in Paris as a journeyman gunsmith, others as fencing masters, and, bringing their earnings to the captain, they had provided for all his wants up to that day. Amputation had been performed, but the fever was violent and malignant, and, as he was afraid that it would become still worse, he sent to beg me to call upon him.

There was no time to be lost. I set out immediately with the worthy soldier, who had

related these particulars to me, with moist eyes and tremulous voice, but without murmur, without abuse, without accusation, merely repeating: "'Tis a great misfortune for us!"

The wounded officer had been carried to the house of a widow, who lived alone and kept a small shop in a retired street of the village, with her children who were quite young. She had not been apprehensive for a moment of compromising herself, and nobody had thought of molesting her on this account. The neighbours, on the contrary, had been eager to assist her in nursing the patient. The surgeons who had been called in, conceiving, after the operation, that he could not be removed with safety, she had kept him, and had frequently sat up with him all night.

When I entered, she came to meet me, with a look of gratitude and timidity that gave me pain: I felt how many embarrassments she must have concealed from good-nature and kindness of heart. She was very pale, and her eyes were red, and wore the expression of fatigue. She went to and fro towards a very small back-shop, which I perceived from the door, and I saw, from her bustle, that she was arranging the little apartment of her patient, and that she

took pride in having it in such a state that a stranger should think it tidy. Of course I took care to allow her all the time that she needed. "Come in, sir," said she, opening the door for me, "he has suffered a great deal."

Captain Renaud was sitting up in a little bed, with curtains of serge, placed in a corner of the room, and several bolsters supported his body. He had fallen away to a skeleton. His face at the cheek-bones was red as fire; the scar on his forehead was black. I saw that he would not last long, and his smile told me so too. He held out his hand to me, and made me a sign to be seated. He had at his right a young boy, who held a glass of gum-water, and was stirring it with a spoon. He rose and brought me his chair. Renaud, from his bed, took hold of his ear, and said mildly, and in a faint voice: "Allow me, my dear fellow, to introduce to you my conqueror."

I shrugged my shoulders, and the poor boy cast down his eyes and blushed. I saw a big tear trickle down his cheek.

"Come! come!" said the captain, passing his hand through his hair, "'tis not his fault; poor boy! He had met with two men, who made him drink brandy, gave him money, and

sent him to fire the pistol at me. He did it, just as he would have thrown a marble at a post —was it not so, Jean?"

Jean trembled, and his face assumed an expression of such anguish that I was touched by it. I looked closer at him; he was a very handsome boy.

"And it was really a marble," said the landlady. "Look, sir" — and she showed me a small marble, of the size of the largest leaden bullets, with which the horse-pistol that lay there had been charged.

"And that was quite enough to lop off the limb of a captain," said Renaud.

"You must not make him talk much," timidly said the shopkeeper to me.

Renaud did not hear her. "Yes, my dear fellow," he continued, "there is not stump enough to fasten a wooden leg to."

I pressed his hand without replying, humbled to see that to kill a man who had seen so much and suffered so much, whose breast was bronzed by twenty campaigns and ten wounds, tried by frost and fire, pierced by bayonet and lance, nothing more was needed than a wriggle of one of the tadpoles of the kennels of Paris, known by the name of *Gamins*.

Renaud replied to my thought. He leaned his cheek upon the bolster and squeezed my hand. "We were at war," said he to me. "He is no more a murderer than I was myself at Rheims. When I killed the Russian boy, perhaps I was a murderer too. In the great war in Spain, the men who stabbed our sentinels did not consider themselves as murderers, and, being at war, perhaps they were not. Were the Catholics and Huguenots murderers or not? —Of how many murders is a great battle composed?—There is one of the points on which reason is puzzled and knows not what to say— It is war that is in fault and not we. I assure you that this little fellow is very gentle and well-disposed. He reads and writes tolerably already. He is a foundling—he was apprenticed to a cabinet-maker — he has not left my room this fortnight, and he is very fond of me, poor thing! He has a turn for mathematics: something may be made of him."

As he spoke with increasing difficulty, and drew nearer to my ear, I stooped my head, and he gave me a small folded paper, which he begged me to run my eye over. I saw that it was a short will, by which he left a bit of a farm which he possessed to the poor woman

who had taken him in, and, after her, to Jean, whom she was to bring up, on condition that he should never be a soldier. He stipulated the sum to be paid to his master for his release, and gave a piece of ground for an asylum to his four old grenadiers. He appointed a country attorney in the neighbourhood his executor.

When the paper was in my hands, he seemed easier and ready to doze. He then shuddered, and, again opening his eyes, he begged me to accept and to keep his bamboo cane. Presently he dozed off again. His old soldier shook his head and took hold of one hand. I took the other, which felt cold. He complained that his feet were cold, and Jean lay down with his little bosom against the bed in order to warm him. Captain Renaud then began to grope at the sheet with his hands, saying that he could not feel it — this is well known to be a fatal sign. His voice was hollow. He raised with difficulty one hand to his forehead, looked stedfastly at Jean, and said : — " It is singular, though ! This urchin is very like the Russian boy."

Presently he closed his eyes, and, pressing my hand, with returning presence of mind :—" Look

you," said he to me, "the brain is seized. 'Tis just over."

His look was different, and more calm. We comprehended this struggle of a firm mind, judging of its situation with the pain that confused it; and to me this sight, on a miserable truckle-bed, was full of solemn majesty.

Again he reddened, and said very loud: "They were fourteen ..... both of them. Who knows if ....."

He then shivered, turned pale, and looked at me quietly and with emotion: — "Tell me!" said he, "could you not shut my mouth for me? I am afraid to speak .... it weakens one .... I should like not to speak again .... I am thirsty."

A few spoonfuls of liquid were given to him, and he said: — "I have done my duty. That idea makes me happy." And he added: "If the country should be the better for what has been done, we have nothing to say, but you will see ....."

He then fell into a doze for about half an hour. After that time, a woman came softly to the door, and made a sign that the surgeon was come. I stepped out on tiptoe to speak to him, went with him into the little garden,

and, having stopped by the side of the well to question him, we heard a loud cry. We hastened in, and saw a sheet thrown over the face of this worthy man — he was no more!

CHAPTER X.

CONCLUSION.

The epoch that has left me these scattered recollections is now closed. Its circle began in 1814 with the battle of Paris, and ended with the three Paris days in 1830. It was the time when, as I have observed, the army of the Empire was absorbed by a then nascent army, which has now arrived at maturity. After having, under various forms, explained the nature and pitied the condition of the Poet in our society, I meant here to show those of the Soldier, another modern Paria.

I wished this book to be for him, what an altar to Fortuna Minor was for the Roman Soldier.

I was pleased with these narratives, because I place above all others that devotedness which does not court observation. The most illustrious sacrifices have something in them that lays claim to glory, and that one cannot help

finding in them in spite of one's self. You would strive in vain to strip them of this character, which lives in them, and which constitutes their force and their stay; it is the bone of their flesh, and the marrow of their bone. There was, perhaps, something in the combat and the spectacle that strengthened the martyrs; the part was so great in that scene, that it might double the energy of the holy victim. Two ideas supported him on both sides — the canonisation of the earth and the beatification of heaven. Let these antique immolations to a holy conviction be for ever venerated: but is not that unknown devotedness which does not even seek the notice of those who are its object — are not those modest, silent, obscure, unheeded sacrifices, hopeless of any crown, human or divine — are not these worthy of our love, when we can discover them? These mute resignations, instances of which are more frequent than one would suppose, have in them so mighty a merit that I know not any virtue which can be compared with them.

It is not unintentionally that I have endeavoured to turn the attention of the army to that PASSIVE GREATNESS, which consists entirely in *self-denial* and *resignation*. It never can com-

pare for splendour with that active greatness in which energetic faculties largely develop themselves; but it will long be the only one to which the armed man can pretend, for he is almost uselessly armed at the present day. The dazzling greatness of conquerors is extinct perhaps for ever. Its past splendour becomes dim, I repeat it, in proportion as disdain of war gains footing in the mind and disgust of cold cruelties in the heart.

Standing armies embarrass their masters. Every sovereign looks with uneasiness at his army; this Colossus, seated at his feet, mute and motionless, annoys and affrights him; he knows not what to do with it, and he fears lest it should turn against him. He sees it burning with ardour and unable to move. The need of an impossible circulation is incessantly irritating the blood of this great body; that blood which is ever boiling and never spilt. From time to time, rumours of great wars arise and growl like distant thunder; but these impotent clouds disperse, these whirlwinds subside into grains of sand, treaties, protocols, and what not. Philosophy has happily circumscribed war, negociations supersede it, and mechanics will completely abolish it by its inventions.

But while the world, yet an infant, is delivering itself from this ferocious plaything, until this consummation, slow, indeed, but which seems to me infallible, the Soldier, the man of war, needs something to soothe the severity of his condition. He feels that the Country, which loved him for the sake of the glories with which he crowned her, begins to despise him for his idleness, or to hate him on account of those civil wars in which he is employed to strike his mother. This gladiator, who no longer has so much as the applause of the Circus, has need to recover confidence in himself, and we have need to pity him, in order to do him justice; because, as I have said, he is blind and mute, obliged to go whithersoever others please, and, while fighting to-day against this or that cockade, asking himself if he may not to-morrow have to mount it on his hat.

What idea is to support him, unless that of Duty and of the oath that he has taken! And, in the uncertainties of his route, in his weighty scruples, and his keen repentances, what sentiment ought to warm and is capable of exalting him in our days of coldness and discouragement? What have we yet left us that is sacred?

In the universal wreck of religious creeds,

what fragments are there to which generous hands can yet cling? Save love of ease and of the luxury of a day, nought is to be seen on the surface of the abyss. One would suppose that selfishness has sunk every thing; even those who seek to save souls, and who plunge in boldly, find themselves on the point of being swallowed up. The heads of the political parties now take religion as a watchword and a banner, but what faith have they in its wonders, and how do they follow its law in their lives? Artists place it in the light, like a precious medal, and plunge into its dogmas as into a source of epic poetry, but how many of them are there that kneel in the church which they decorate? Many philosophers embrace its cause, and plead it as generous advocates plead that of a poor and forlorn client; their writings and their words love to tinge themselves with its colours, to impress themselves with its forms; their books love to adorn themselves with its Gothic gilding; in all they do, they delight to make the mazy labyrinth of their arguments wind around the cross; but how rarely is that cross beside them in solitude! The military man fights and dies almost without ever thinking of God. Our age knows that it is so, and would

fain be otherwise, but cannot. It surveys itself with gloomy eye, and no other ever felt so deeply how unhappy is an age that sees itself.

From these melancholy signs, some foreigners have deemed us sunk into a state similar to that of the Lower Empire; and grave men have asked themselves if the national character was not about to be lost for ever. But those who have looked more closely at us, have remarked that character of manly determination which survives in us all that has been so deplorably worn by the friction of sophisms. Manly actions have lost none of their antique vigour in France. A prompt resolution governs sacrifices as great, as complete, as ever. More coolly calculated, battles are conducted with more scientific violence. The least thought produces acts as great as the most fervent faith formerly did. Among us creeds are weak, but man is strong. The youth of the present generation cease not to defy death, either from duty or caprice, with a Spartan smile; a smile, the more intrepid, inasmuch as all of them do not believe in the feasts of the gods.

Yes, I have thought that I perceived in this dreary sea a point that to me appeared solid. I beheld it at first with uncertainty, nay, I could

not believe my eyes; I was afraid to examine it, and, for a long time, I turned them away. By and by, tormented by the recollection of this first sight, I reverted, in spite of myself, to this visible but uncertain point. I approached it, I went round it, I have seen beneath it and above it, I have laid my hand on it, I have found it solid enough to afford support in emergency; and I have been soothed by this conviction.

It is not a new faith, a worship of new invention, a confused thought, but a sentiment born with us and in us, independent of time, place, and even religion; a proud, an inflexible, sentiment; an instinct, which has not found till modern times a name worthy of itself, but which produced sublime greatness even in antiquity, and fertilised it like those beautiful rivers, which, at their source and in their first windings, have not yet any appellation. This faith, which seems to me to be still left to all, and to bear sovereign sway in armies, is that of HONOUR.

I do not see that it has grown weaker or that any thing has worn it. 'Tis not an idol; it is for most men a god, and a god around which many superior gods have fallen. The fall of all their temples has not shaken its statue.

An indefinable vitality animates this singular, this proud virtue, which stands firm amidst all our vices, even harmonizing with them to such a degree as to gain strength from their energy. While all the other virtues seem to descend from heaven to lend us a hand and to raise us up, this appears to come from ourselves and to tend to mount to heaven. It is a wholly human virtue, which we may believe to be born upon earth, without any celestial palm after death : it is the virtue of life.

Such as it is, its worship, interpreted in various ways, is always uncontested. It is a masculine religion, without symbol and without images, without dogmas and without ceremonies, whose laws are written nowhere ; and yet how is it that all men have the sentiment of its serious power? The present men, the men of the hour in which I am writing, are sceptical and ironical for every thing excepting this. Every one looks grave when its name is uttered. This is not theory, but observation. At the name of honour, the man feels something stir within him, which is, as it were, a part of himself; and this thrill awakens all the powers of his pride and of his primitive energy. An invincible firmness supports him against all and

against himself, at the thought of watching over that pure tabernacle which is in his bosom as a second heart wherein a god is enshrined. Hence he derives inward consolations, the more exquisite since he is ignorant of their real source and reason; hence, too, those sudden revelations of the just, the beautiful, the true; hence a light that every where goes before him.

Honour is Conscience, but exalted Conscience. It is respect for one's self, and for the beauty of life carried to the purest elevation and to the most ardent passion. No where, it is true, do I see unity in its principle, and, whenever people have undertaken to define it, they have lost themselves among terms, but, as far as I can see, they have not been more precise in the definition of God. Is this any proof against an existence that is universally felt? Herein lies, perhaps, its highest merit, in being so potent and invariably beautiful, whatever its source.

Sometimes it prompts a man not to survive an affront, sometimes to bear it with a fortitude and a magnanimity that repair it and efface its stain. At others, it suggests great enterprizes, magnificent and persevering struggles, unheard-of sacrifices, slowly accomplished, and more admirable for their patience and their obscurity

than the flights of a sudden enthusiasm, or of a violent indignation; it produces acts of beneficence, which evangelical charity never surpassed; it has wonderful tolerations, delicate kindnesses, divine indulgences, sublime pardons. At all times and in all places, it maintains the personal dignity of man in all its beauty.

Honour is Virile Modesty. With us the disgrace of violating it is greater than any other disgrace. This indefinable thing, then, is a sacred thing.

Consider the value among us of this popular, universal, decisive, and yet simple, expression: to give one's word of Honour. Here the human word ceases to be merely the expression of ideas, it becomes the word *par excellence*, the sacred word among all words, as if it were born with the first articulate sound uttered by the tongue of man; and, as if after it there were not another word worthy of being pronounced, it becomes the promise of man to man, blest by all nations; it becomes even an oath, because you add to it the words OF HONOUR.

Thenceforward, each has his word, and is as tenacious of it as of his life. The gamester has his, holds it sacred, and keeps it: in the whirl of the passions, it is given, taken, and, wholly

profane as it is, it is sacredly observed. And this principle, which we may consider as innate, which nothing renders obligatory but the internal assent of all—is it not more especially of sovereign beauty when it is practised by the military man?

The word of Honour, which is too often a mere word with the politician, becomes a terrible fact with the soldier: what the one says lightly or perfidiously, the other writes in the dust with his blood; and hence it is honoured by all above every thing, and many are obliged to cast down their eyes before it.

May the purest of religions, in its new phases, not attempt to deny or stifle this sentiment of Honour, which lives within us, like a last lamp in a ruined temple! May it rather appropriate it to itself, and unit it with its own splendours, by placing it, as an additional light, upon its altar, which it is striving to restore! Here is a divine work to accomplish.

For my part, struck with this happy sign, I only aimed at, and indeed I was only capable of producing an humble and entirely human work, and at simply stating what I fancied that I had discovered yet living among us. Let us beware of saying of this antique God of Honour,

that he is a false god, for the corner-stone of his altar is, perhaps, that of the altar of the unknown God. The magic loadstone of that altar attracts and attaches the hearts of steel, the hearts of the strong. Say, is this not so, ye, my brave comrades, ye, for whom I have penned these narratives!—O new Theban Legion! ye who submitted to have your heads crushed upon this stone of the oath! — say, all ye saints and martyrs of the religion of HONOUR!

REMARKS

ON

THE FIRST VOLUME.

BY THE EDITOR.

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REMARKS ON CHAPTER I.

THE Introduction to the work of the Count Alfred de Vigny contains some assertions which, although they may apply to foreign armies, do not correctly describe that of England, and it appears to me desirable that the distinctions which are so favourable to the latter should be clearly pointed out; as they set the character of the British army as much above that of the continental troops (supposing the account given of the latter by Count Alfred de Vigny to be correct), as the English constitution is superior to the constitution of every other nation. I beg it to be understood that I do not speak with disparagement of the courage, discipline, or other qualities, belonging to the continental armies,

especially to that of France. I speak merely of the *constitution* of armies, to which Count de Vigny refers when he laments that, in the "organization of modern armies, the soldier is separated from the citizen, that he is unhappy and ferocious, because he feels that his situation is bad and absurd. It is lamentable," continues he, "that, while every thing is changing among us, the destiny of the soldier should alone undergo no modification."

Upon these assertions I must observe that, as I have not witnessed the ferocity of the French soldiers as a mass, I do not believe it to be their general character; on the contrary, I have known innumerable instances of their kindness and generosity—I have myself experienced both, and I believe them to be brave and honourable.

It is true that, though ferocity does put forth its tiger fangs and claws in modern warfare, yet that ferocity is greatly diminished, when compared with the horrors which were committed in ancient times: formerly ferocity was the rule, now it is the exception; and the spirit of the age denounces all unnecessary cruelty in the prosecution of war.

But there are some things that may be abolished, still further to assuage the injustice and asperities of war; among these, two are particularly striking. With respect to one of them

there are various opinions; the other all condemn. The *first* is the seizure of private merchant ships. The *second* is the sacking of towns taken by storm.

With regard to the first, it is an authorized act of severity, a premeditated "doing of evil that good may come of it," which, indeed, is the case with most of the operations of war. The second is one sometimes tolerated, generally forbidden, but rarely, if ever, prevented, whatever may be the exertions of the commanders to effect this humane purpose.

The seizure of merchant ships by vessels of war has been both reprobated and defended by men so capable of handling the subject, that I shall not presume to say much upon a matter, which, at first sight, appears to be so unjust; but, alas! there is much to be said in proof of the expediency of this cruel proceeding. In war we must weaken the enemy, and the soldier and sailor have a right to say—"Are we to risk our lives in battle, while you, our rulers, allow the enemy to gain strength by commerce? we die, because you spare his merchant vessels, and enable him to keep up the war by his traffic." In short, it will scarcely be admitted by the power which rules the sea, that her strongest means to force a peace can be abandoned; especially as this proceeding, however severely it may fall

upon the individuals who suffer, is not attended with bloodshed. To destroy an enemy's commerce is a step towards peace. By allowing it to continue free, war must be prolonged, and the quantity of bloodshed is increased.

I will support my opinion by a well-known fact. When we went to war with America, in 1811, the United States were any thing but *united.* The Northern States, in consequence of their commercial relations, were adverse to the war; the Southern States were for it. The English Government, whose operations across the Atlantic form a chain of diplomatic exploits which few cabinets could rival, and of which the southern link is formed by the twenty millions so *generously* bestowed on the slave-holders in the West Indies, and the northern, by the revolt of the Canadas—our Government, I repeat, gave licences to the vessels of the Northern States to pass our cruisers unmolested, while the vessels of the Southern States were captured; our Government thinking, by this policy, to conciliate the Northern States, and excite a sort of personal tenderness and loving affection for us, in the bosoms of the northmen, that would make them quite obstreperous with their President. But, unhappily for our policy, Northern Jonathan, whose habits of thought are more given to the results of arithmetic than the effusions of

sentiment, finding that his apprehensions for his ships were vain, and that, on the contrary, we fell upon his rivals, the Southern States, while his own vessels arrived safely in port, found the war "quite comfortable." He made a modest splutter about peace and patriotism, just to save appearances; but gave his President no trouble.

At last our Government discovered what every man across the Atlantic knew from the first; and our cruisers received orders to capture the Northern vessels. This quite altered matters, and the Northern States began to threaten the President with a separation. The President became embarrassed between the North and the South. A peace became necessary, and England might have dictated the terms. But, having been well thrashed both by sea and by land, and having disgraced our flag by buccaneering expeditions along the coast, we finished by being defeated in diplomacy as well as in war, and concluded a miserable peace at the moment when a little fortitude and perseverance would have given us the ascendency! I do not refer to the justice or the policy of that war, because I deny that there was either the one or the other in it; but I give the foregoing as a strong instance, in which the seizure of merchant ships was not only advantageous in carrying on the war, but the means of producing an immediate peace.

What an opportunity we then lost of dealing with America! An able minister would have continued the war; the Northern States would have withdrawn from the Union, and, declaring themselves independent, have made a separate peace with Great Britain. The latter might then have raised the negroes of the South, and, at the head of an immense force of armed and disciplined Black regiments, dictated peace at Washington, erecting the Delaware into an independent Black state, in alliance with England, and supported by the Northern States, of which it would form the left flank against the Southerns. Thus would America be too much divided to quarrel with England, while the powerful, if honest, mediation of the latter would preserve peace between the Northern and Southern States —a peace, that it would be the interest of all to cultivate, but most so of England, which country would, at the same time, have the greatest power to preserve harmony.

This line of policy may be adopted yet, if we have a war with the United States. It may be effected at any time while slavery exists; a nation, that is not governed by fools, may do what it likes against another nation in which it has two millions of true friends. 'Tis true they may be *Blacks*, but Blacks make capital soldiers. "But they would require to be drilled,"

cries the statesman (especially if he commands a corps of yeomanry). Yes, that is certain, but so would the free-born American citizens, the republican slave-drivers that are so proud of being without a standing army, without "paid cut-throats," as we are called. Now, from my knowledge of both, I will venture to say, that the docile, intelligent, eager, liberated slave would be drilled in less time by half than the free-born slave-driver, who, when the instructor of the drill politely says, "If you please, private Jonathan, have the goodness to shoulder your gun;" answers, "I guess now, Colonel, that is a good joke of your's, but the sun is tarnation hot, and I'll be d——d if I do! I calculate I'll lay down under yon tree." Before the free-born could get out of the awkward squad, an English officer would have his four hundred thousand Blacks able to manœuvre in battalions, brigades, and divisions, with British troops.

For the republican must not run away with the idea that our *soldiers* were beaten at New Orleans; they were ready to go on, and might have carried all before them; they retired *by order*. If the Americans had been a match for our troops in the field, they would have prevented a single British soldier from re-embarking! I should be sorry to detract from the merit and victory of General Jackson; but it

was the victory of the *General,* not of the *troops.* The American army is brave, but it will always take a long time to discipline; a Black army would take very little time. To the one, discipline is odious, and against the feelings and habits of the men. To the other, discipline is delightful. The black slave, turned into a soldier, gains a great step in life. from the basest, he enters the noblest state of man—a soldier, armed for freedom! To the former, the military habit gives a feeling of degradation: to the latter it gives a feeling of honour. No doubt can be entertained, which will soonest be formed into an obedient, well-drilled, manœuvring force! But, to return from this digression, for which I must entreat the reader's pardon, in consideration of the interest of the subject:

In case of war, England can, in a great measure, monopolize commerce; and, while she can do this, the cries of outraged merchants will be borne away unheeded on the breeze that enables a British ship to capture them. But, while I maintain the necessity of this aggression on merchant ships, it is true that hard cases of this nature occur in our naval history. I will relate one. A small English brig of war, at the beginning of the last contest with America, was in great danger. A large American merchantman hove in sight; the master was not aware that

war had been declared; he bore down to save the brig, and gave her the necessary assistance. When safe, the English captain was obliged to inform the master of the merchantman that war had been declared between England and America; consequently, his duty obliged him to make a prize of his deliverer. The scene was distressing; the captured American sailors being also the owners of the ship. The captain and crew of the British man-of-war acted as generous sailors always act: they gave their share of the prize-money to the owners; but the ship could not be liberated.*

With this fact I shall conclude the subject of seizing merchant ships in war. Some say it is unjust, others say nay, and there I leave it, siding with the latter party, if the war be just, as far as my judgment enables me to see my way in so intricate a question.

On the other evil of modern warfare, namely that of sacking towns, the view is less embarrassing. The pillage of a town is a necessary lure to the soldier, to compensate him for a desperate risk, and stimulate him to a courageous assault. I shall be told that honour should be a sufficient excitement to all daring deeds — yes!

* For a strong case of hardship, arising out of these captures, see Sir H. Bunbury's Life of Sir T. Hanmer, in a note, page 409.

it should be, but it is not; and we have, on such occasions, to deal with things as they are, not with things as they should be. If a high sense of honour and Christianity reigned paramount in the hearts of those who rule the kingdoms of the earth, we should have no war; the whole series of questions arising out of war would be expunged, and the word "*war*" forgotten!

But, as rulers, and the people whom they govern, seek to gain some pecuniary advantages by war, so do those soldiers who are employed in that operation. In short, we operatives have an eye to self-interest as well as our rulers. The stimulus of "prize money" is under various names common to all. From the king to the cabin-boy, from the bishop to the curate, all worship Mammon! What are the Droits of Admiralty? But, as the soldier has a conscience quite as much alive to honour, mercy, and religion, as any other man, he wishes to get only such prize-money as has been agreed upon among nations, and he wishes to get it with as little pain to those who lose as is compatible with war. Moreover, soldiers throw all the blame of those sufferings which the inhabitants of a country undergo by war upon the rulers who make war, and who, while they send us to suffer its dangers, live quietly at home and in

safety, calling for blood, blood! as has been recorded on many occasions. If we sailors and soldiers inflict more suffering upon individuals than the success of our operations demands, *then* we become responsible to God, to our Sovereign, to our country, and we deserve condign punishment. Now it is to prevent such outrageous conduct that I would propose to regulate the storming of towns by a military law; and to do this we know to be practicable, because it was done by the Romans for a merciless purpose, and therefore may be done by Britons and by Gauls for a humane purpose.

What I propose is this — to have a law established, ordaining that, whenever a town is stormed, the soldiers shall have the plunder of the said town; but that they shall not slay non-combatants, much less injure or insult the women and the children. Religion, honour, and humanity, peremptorily forbid the commission of such horrible deeds. But, as all these non-combatants are lawful prisoners, if the towns thus taken by storm belong to the enemy, they must be ransomed, and thus a compromise be made to satisfy the soldier for his danger. I propose, therefore,

That, in storming a town, no man should be allowed to ill-treat the person of any but armed men who resist;

That no soldier should dare plunder under pain of death;

That, after the assault, the people should be counted, and a poll-tax levied as ransom upon every man, woman, and child, that was preserved;

That the value of all property, private and public, within the walls should be taken immediately, and the amount paid at once to the soldiers. At once, mind; *no* "*Deccan prize-money*," no fraud upon the troops; but immediate payment should be made;

That all soldiers found in a drunken state should be instantly shot;

That all individual plunderers, or men ill-using unarmed people, should be instantly shot;

That a guard, called the "*Booty guard*," should follow the stormers, be under the command of the provost-marshal, and execute instant death upon all offenders: three military judges being attendant on the provost-marshal to put their *veto* upon immediate execution, in the event of a doubtful case arising, which might demand a farther inquiry, and call for the suspension of capital punishment.

By this law two things would be gained: First, the inhabitants of a town taken by assault would be saved from suffering ill treatment personally, though a heavy pecuniary loss would be

inflicted upon them; Secondly, the brave soldier would be rewarded; whereas, as things now are, the coward, who fears to mount the breach, steals in after it has been carried; this villain then begins plundering that which the better man has won. Thus the brave and humane remain at their post and gain nothing, while the cruel and cowardly gain all. This is unjust; the soldiers know it, and, were such a law as I now propose in force, the good soldier would feel that the vile marauder, in robbing the townsmen, was robbing *him;* because every act of robbery diminishes the good soldier's own share of the plunder; and the "*Booty guard*" would then be assisted by every brave man in the army. It is true that some forty or fifty rascals would be shot in half an hour, the first time a town was stormed after the promulgation of this law. But what of that? twice as many, ay, ten times as many, innocent people would be saved! and when the villains of an army found that the law was not to be trifled with, they would respect it: thus war would be rendered less ferocious to the helpless inhabitants of the country where it raged.

The principle upon which such a law would be founded, is one which secures its easy execution, viz., enlisting the interests of the *many* against the interests of the *few*. The good

soldiers of an army predominate; but they cannot keep the bad soldiers in subjection, unless backed by the force of such a law, which makes the good soldier see in every marauder the robber of his own property; the man whom he is by personal interest, by honour, and by military law, bound to act against; and he does so accordingly.

The good soldiers of an army are somewhere about ten to one, compared to the bad soldiers; and of the bad ones, probably not above five out of ten are of such desperate character as to commit the cruelties perpetrated upon the inhabitants of a town taken by assault. It is but a small band that do these deeds. A law of the nature which I propose would be among the most useful that rule an army.

The Count Alfred de Vigny says, "at the present day, all that conquered towns have to apprehend is the payment of contributions;" had the Count ever witnessed the storming of a town, he would not have hazarded so erroneous an assertion. The dreadful scenes which took place on these occasions during the last war are too notorious to require being enumerated; and any French or English officer who served in the Peninsula will undeceive him. For example, let him ask for the details of what passed when the French army took Oporto in 1809; or when

the English army took St. Sebastian in 1811. Such things would not take place if the law which I have proposed were to be in force.

The next sentence which strikes my attention is the following :—

"It is impossible to hasten too much the period when armies shall be more identified with the nation." So says the Count Alfred de Vigny; and he is right as regards his own and other continental armies; but in England the army is already "identified with the nation." An English army forms a portion of the constitution of the country; its pay is voted annually by the direct will of the people, expressed through their representatives in the House of Commons; the army is thus created by the breath of the nation, and dies at its will. It is therefore under the complete control of, and cannot be more identified with, the nation.

The essence of an army is *obedience* to its chief; the chief of the English army is the sovereign. But its existence depends upon the nation. Let me exemplify what I mean.

Suppose that some measure should become popular; say, for instance, the abolition of the corn laws, and that the parliament rejected a motion made by some popular member for the abolition of those laws. Suppose, furthermore, that a large portion of the nation were dis-

contented; that the motion failed; and that among the manufacturing towns a tumultuous assembly of 50,000 people, rendered furious by distress and disappointment, proceeded to those acts of violence which an ungovernable and angry multitude are apt to commit. Suppose, further, that the general officer commanding the troops in the neighbourhood of such a tumult was the identical man who, as a member of parliament, made the motion to abolish the corn laws. Here, surely, the author will admit that the troops are sufficiently identified with the people; their commander being the popular member in the House of Commons; the soldiers being to a man voluntarily enrolled, and having fathers, brothers, and other relatives, among the rioters. The union with the people cannot be more close. "Yes," says some flimsy reasoner, "the army might join the multitude, and carry the abolition of the corn laws by force of arms." Let us examine this; for, as *that* is the only way in which Count de Vigny's wish can be accomplished more than is now the case with the British army, it is necessary to prove its absurdity.

The popular member and general of the troops, being united in the same person, is thus addressed by the leader of the rioters: "Having failed in the House, join us and force the aboli-

tion of the odious corn laws by arms; let us unite, and march to London." But the general would not do this; he would say to the leader of the rioters: "Would you have me break all the existing laws of England and her constitution to help a mob of 50,000 in an attempt to repeal a law, which repeal the representatives of 20,000,000 of people have rejected! Will you, 50,000 angry and misled men, break the laws of England? You are pursuing a *right* object, perhaps, but you do so in a *wrong* way, and thus oppose twenty millions of your fellow-subjects who disapprove of the Bill? What though your Bill be right, is this the way to carry it? No! does not the constitution say you must seek reform by the petitions of great associations, and by returning members who represent your wishes? Yes! then, if we soldiers join you, we break the constitution which is the pride and glory of the English people, and we deserve to be shot as traitors."

And is it "identifying the soldier with the nation," to join 50,000 against 20,000,000, in destroying that freedom and excellent constitution which the nation has gained by ages of struggling? Certainly not; it would be to identify him with the *minority*, not with the *nation*.

Then, what should the commander and troops do to prove that they are perfectly identified

with the people? There can be but one answer: obey the orders of the sovereign set over them by the people, in order to protect the laws and the constitution of England, in all its integrity. The general must stand by the magistrates of the land, and say to the 50,000 rioters: "You are not the people of England; your object may be just or unjust — with that, I, as the leader of these troops, have no concern. Petition and remonstrate, as the constitution decrees; but offend not the laws of the land, which the nation has placed me here to protect; and, by such a defence of the crown and laws, I and my troops are 'identified with the nation.'" "But," says an adversary, "suppose that the majority of the people demand a repeal of the corn laws? and that the Parliament vote those laws should be repealed; that the sovereign refuses; that a quarrel takes place; and that the House of Commons refuses supplies for the payment of the troops?" Well, what then? The army, if not paid, dissolves, and there is no longer an army; and it is still, as I say, identified, in its life and in its death, with the nation.

If the sovereign chooses to hoist a royal standard against the Parliament; if the Parliament chooses to hoist the standard of revolt against the sovereign; then two armies arise, neither of them being the constitutional army of

England, but two unconstitutional and hostile armies, tearing the nation to atoms; and about such armies, which are not recognised by the constitution of England, I cannot speak: they would be monsters of destruction.

If I am right in this view, then the present constitutional army of England is, like its sovereign, perfectly "identified with the nation," and can only cease to be so, when it ceases to be paid by the representatives of the nation, and ceases to obey the sovereign.

How different was the constitution of the French army in the time of Charles X! for that King did not command the army of the country; he commanded his own army. It came in collision with the people, and was broken to pieces. The French soldiers, during the "Three Days," had their King on one side, their countrymen on the other. They were shaken with doubts and fears. Some held fast by the King; some joined the people; some were neuter. None were sure what it was right to do. This can never be the case with the army of England; its duties are distinct. The militia of England, the yeomanry of England, have both been called, and justly called, the "national force of the country;" but they are not one whit more national than the regular army of England, as at present constituted.

Count de Vigny says "that Frederick the Great's greatness chiefly consisted in knowing himself thoroughly, in appreciating the elements of his elevation at their real value, and in doing the honours of his victories with the modesty of a sage." There are men who take a pleasure in finding a fanciful way of accounting for great men's actions by some small rule of their own. I would ask the author, why he could not say plainly that Frederick's greatness consisted in his being a very clever fellow, and in his being also a despotic sovereign, which enabled him to give the full effect to his great abilities? *That* was what his greatness consisted in. M. de Vigny says that he was vexed to see Bonaparte ape Frederick in his hat, snuff-box, and gestures: this is puerile. Why should the greater man ape the lesser? Neither M. de Vigny, nor any one else, will set up Frederick as the equal of Napoleon! But the cocked hat! Well, it was that of the time—Napoleon could not go bare-headed, or wear a red night-cap, because Frederick wore a cocked hat; but, suppose Napoleon's hat to have been like that of Frederick's, what then? Would any one have had him give up his time to direct the operations of his hatter, that he might not make a cocked hat like Frederick's? or to his tailor, that he might not make his breeches like Frederick's breeches?

Then, Napoleon took snuff, and Frederick took snuff; — imitation again! And his gestures too! poor imitative Napoleon! he was not to walk, or ride, or sneeze, &c., because Frederick walked, and rode, and sneezed!

There are men, clever men too, and Count Alfred de Vigny seems to be one of them, who think it unphilosophical to admire a great man: the vulgar admire him; it is too common, and it is much more wise to discover his failings and peculiarities! these are the primary matters, in the consideration of such philosophers: upon these they fix, and these they dissect. The great deeds of Napoleon and Frederick, the powers of their minds, which make the universe resound, and will reverberate through revolving ages, are but secondary matters for contemplation in the minds of our minute philosophers. Immortal victories are passed by unheeded, and the cocked hats of the heroes are placed before us in all their squareness. Rosbach, Prague, Austerlitz, Marengo, are lost in the wondrous cock of the hat, expelled by the pungency of snuff, or beaten by the crutch-like cane!

I cannot believe, with Count Alfred's father, that a warm admiration for able generals, like Frederick the Great or Napoleon, can make bad officers; on the contrary, it leads men to study,

and to merit their approbation, though enemies, and to learn their wisdom.

I must once more differ from the author, who says, he regrets that his passion for military glory began when "France was beginning to be cured of it." I have lately spent two years in France, and, though I admit that Count de Vigny ought to be a better judge than myself, yet I saw no symptom of France being cured of the desire for military glory. I think that "*young France*" teems with it, and only wants a leader, to blaze forth in all the wildness of war. The love of military glory is a strong disease in all countries, but an incurable one in the heart of a Frenchman. In this world we are formed by circumstances. The force of England is in her commerce, and on the ocean she is, therefore, strong. Englishmen are essentially sailors.

The force of France, jammed in, as she is, between the continental powers, is in her army, and Frenchmen are, therefore, essentially soldiers. England fights for her commerce. France fights for her frontiers; defeat and partition seem to be synonymous with France. It was Napoleon, not France, who was conquered at Waterloo; and Napoleon was only conquered because France was divided. Her republicans abandoned their country and their sovereign to gain power for themselves. But, debating under

the points of half a million of foreign bayonets in possession of Paris, was not the way to gain a free constitution. The treachery of these Jacobins prevented Napoleon from heading the army of the Loire. He did not wish to raise a civil war for his own aggrandisement. He had formerly, when very young, refused to command a republican army, against the people of La Vendée — a proof of the sincerity of his patriotism. After Waterloo, he, a second time, refused to mix in civil war. This detestation of civil war was a strong characteristic feeling in the heart of that great sovereign. Glory — ambition — France! these he loved; but none of these could be served by civil war, and, therefore, he rejected it. The same horror of it reigns in the breast of his conqueror: a civil war is a hell upon earth. But for this hatred of civil war in the breast of Napoleon, the Allies would soon have discovered that France was not conquered, though Paris might be taken. They well knew this, or France would have been partitioned in 1815.

No; France is not cured of the passion for military glory, nor England of her passion for commerce. But the two governments have virtuously (thanks to their want of money) planted the olive; the two people, no longer deceived as to each other's characters, are closely

united by a bond of peace; while a determination to force, step by step, constitutional governments upon all the world, seems to be the order of the day; checks and difficulties there are, but the progress of liberal opinions is incessant. It is, as all men proclaim, and all passing events prove, the spirit of the age—and autocrats yield, reluctantly, but still they yield, under its constant pressure—forcing itself into every weak part which despotism presents. Printing and rail-roads gave the death-blow to tyranny. But it is impossible to believe that the despots of Austria, Prussia, and Russia, will surrender their undue power without a struggle; and the first war will show Count de Vigny whether or not France be cured of her passion for military glory.

REMARKS ON CHAPTER II.

The observations which I have made on the first chapter apply, in some parts, to the second. In this chapter, the author endeavours to prove that formerly the citizen and the soldier were one and the same; not separated as, he says, is the case with modern standing armies. Now, I believe, that in no age was the English army more strictly national than at this moment, or

more honoured by the nation. Does not the respect paid to the Duke of Wellington, in spite of political feelings, and the reception lately given to Marshal Soult—a reception so honourable to the English character—show how Englishmen honour military greatness in friend and foe? And, however strongly many dislike a standing army, none are hostile to the soldiers, who are every where well received.

The Count Alfred de Vigny, with the true aristocratic spirit of ancient days, seems to approve of that system, under which nobles led their followers against each other and against their sovereigns—days when every noble was a little king. Then every regiment did, indeed, as the author says, "belong to the colonel," but it did not "belong to the nation," as he erroneously adds: for under an oligarchy nothing "belongs to the nation." An oligarchy divides the sovereign and the people from each other, keeping both in grievous subjection. I am surprised that so sensible a person as Count de Vigny should not perceive that, if each military chief were independent of the crown, the crown could not protect either itself or the people against the military chief; and that all the horrors of war must be multiplied, in any country where an army so constituted may be employed. An oligarchy possesses all the ob-

jectionable parts of a kingly government. It does not possess one of the many advantages which belong to a monarchy. A monarch—unless he be a monster—naturally loves the people, and all he does is intended for their benefit. He may, and often does, commit faults, and is mistaken in his measures; but he loves the people, and their interests are identified with his own, both in his feelings and in fact. The monarch of England mounts the throne free, and is not obliged to make an electioneering pledge the rule of his government, as is the case with the leader of an oligarchy and the president of a republic. The members of an oligarchy are pledged to their party; they are the enemies of every man, woman, and child in the land, except those who belong to their own order, to enrich which the national revenue is laid under contribution. They are the bitter foes, and also the masters, of the King or chief magistrate, and of the people. In Venice, for example, they made a wretched puppet, called their Doge, (*Dog* would have been a more appropriate title) put his son to death!

The interests of the crown and those of the people must ever be one and the same, and, therefore, that "independence of the army," which the author boasts of as having formerly existed, and which, he says, M. de Louvois de-

stroyed in France, was highly mischievous, and utterly at variance with Count Alfred's own wish, that the soldier should be identified with the nation. M. de Louvois acted like a wise man and a patriot, when he "delivered it up, bound hand and foot, to the sovereign power;" for, it is surely better to be ruled by one despotic king than by hundreds of small but merciless tyrants.

Count Alfred's "plain rough gentlemen" did not win battles for Turenne—Turenne won battles for them. When the Marquess de Coetquen made the mutinous speech to Louis XIV, quoted by Count de Vigny, the King ought to have answered: "Yes, I leave you the pieces, but as you will want a cord to tie them up, take it." And he should have hanged the insolent feudal lord and mutineer upon the spot. Such would have been the treatment given by a feudal lord to any of *his* poor vassals! M. de Louvois having taken the French army out of the hands of the "rough gentlemen," (I thank Count A. de Vigny for this handy expression) and placed it in those of the King, the author tells us that it and all armies, for all continental armies are in the like predicament, have become "Helots, and he wishes to see them more "identified with the nation." I have endeavoured to show that the English army is *not* composed of "Helots,"

that it *is* identified with the nation, and that, so far, we are superior to all European armies.

Believing our constitution to be the most perfect that man has yet invented to protect himself from violence and injustice, and thinking our army to be, practically if not theoretically, an essential branch of the executive part of our constitution, I should here stop; but having, as yet, referred only to Europe, I may be permitted to say a few words about America, her President, and her army; which last is only assembled when called upon by the pressure of the moment; that is to say, when America is threatened with invasion, or when she wishes to invade and destroy her unfortunate Indian neighbours, towards whom she seems resolved to pursue the example of the mother country; incessantly extending the effects of that unjust principle of conquest over the unhappy aborigines, which ruled the conduct of the first European invaders who settled in the New World, and has continued to influence both nations up to the present day. I must, however, observe here, in justice to the present Colonial Secretary,* that he seems resolved to redeem the English name from the infamy which attaches to every civilized nation, that, preferring might to right, seizes upon the territory of helpless savages, without purchasing

* Lord Glenelg.

their lands; a purchase so easily made, that the cost would be scarcely worth mentioning, while the omission to make it is a disgraceful breach of the strongest principle of social existence—the inviolability of property. In England, a poor man's hut may not be worth five pounds; yet, the government dare not take it from him, unless its value be paid, no, not even if required for the national safety. But the same government, with all the cant of pretended religion, and with a reckless injustice, have hitherto not only seized upon whole countries by force, but have treated the aborigines with indescribable cruelty. This detestable conduct, Lord Glenelg (to his honour be it said) has apparently resolved to abolish, and, in defiance of colonial tyrants, to rescue the natives from injustice and his country from disgrace.

To return from this digression. The American army is, as I have stated, assembled on the spur of the moment: it is not a standing army, and, because it repulsed our generals at New Orleans, the republicans all over the world rejoiced, and exclaimed: "What are regular armies good for? See how easily they can be defeated by free men, who rush to arms on the call of their country, and drive the hired red-coated butchers from the hallowed soil of America!" In short, America is said to be none

free than England, and her armies, for that reason, superior to our's. I deny both these assertions: and I will endeavour to show that the English soldiers who attacked New Orleans were more free and more patriotic than the Americans who were opposed to them.

In the first place, let me observe, that neither army had any right to be *there* — the land belonged to the poor Indians. Injustice pitched the camps of both armies: so far they stood upon equal ground. To show that our army was as free as the American army, and as patriotic, I must again refer to our constitutional superiority, to prove that the English were the more national troops of the two. We serve no despot; we serve an hereditary constitutional sovereign, whose feelings and actions must have the good of the whole empire for their foundation: while, on the contrary, the army of America obeys an ephemeral king, who mounts the throne with less exalted principles and feelings.

The President of America must act under the influence of that faction which has raised him to his temporary throne. If we suppose virtue to be desirable in the first magistrate of a country, a constitutional hereditary sovereign is more likely to be virtuous than a temporary elective sovereign; because the real interests of the first are proverbially linked to the interests of the

people, and men are generally virtuous in proportion as their interests depend upon their being so. Prejudice, bad education, human frailties, may, and often do, obscure the views and distort the conduct of an hereditary monarch; but the evil effect of these is reduced to a mere speck in a constitutional government like our's. Is the education of a first magistrate in America better? He is, or, at least, he may be, educated as a slave-holder — the worst of all educations! The spread of knowledge daily shows all sovereigns that they and the people have a common interest. The case is different with an elective sovereign, who reigns for a very few years, for instance, the President of America. He has every temptation to be wicked; he is ambitious to be the king of a day, or he would not seek the Presidency; he must gratify the wishes of a strong party, in order to obtain the object of his ambition—namely, his election. I have, therefore, a right to suppose that, when a man's views of politics gratify his ambition, his ambition, rather than his virtue, has created his views. An American President advocates slavery: would he do so if slavery was unpopular in America? No! "That is what I want," says the republican, "the chief magistrate governs by the wishes of the people." And if those wishes be erroneous, if they be horrible, would you have

no check upon them?—no power to make the majority reflect?—to give the virtuous minority time to put forth their arguments in the cause of justice? The republicans can hardly deny that such a check is necessary; and this is the use of a King, and of a House of Lords with a *suspensive power;* the use of a sovereign, *not* elective, and *not* the mere mouthpiece of a faction, as is the President of America. Let us suppose a case; it is imaginary, but within the bounds of probability. Suppose the slave-driving southern States of America to have more influence than the honester northern States; suppose that, to gain the votes of the slave States, some candidate for the Presidency furiously advocates, either sincerely or hypocritically, the cause of the most cruel slavery that ever disgraced a human institution. If he *sincerely* advocates this infamous traffic in human blood, he is imbued with the principles of tyranny over his fellow men; it is ingrafted into his very heart: the love of selling and flogging the poor and helpless is sucked in with his mother's milk: it has become a part of his very nature. If, on the contrary, believing it to be horrible, he, nevertheless, supports the damnable system from feelings of personal ambition, *then* he is a savage hypocrite. Suppose this citizen be elected President. Is he not elected on account of his devotion to tyranny

or his simulation? Now, I ask my English reader whether he thinks such a sovereign desirable? The sovereign of a people, *two millions of whose working men are in chains*, and whom he has, with heart, word, and deed, doomed to chains for ever!—is he not opposed to the will of every honest man? of every christian in his own nation? to the opinion of honest men in every nation? Again, I ask, can such vast power be safely confided to such hands? and yet, in such hands, the American power, as a great nation, may be placed! The Presidents of the United States may be honest men; I dispute neither their virtue, nor their great abilities; but a President may come who is not virtuous, and, in truth, if virtue be allowed to any man who advocates a continuance of the slave-trade, we concede such virtue to him in compassion for the unhappy prejudices of his education, and rather out of charity, than under the influence of any other feeling.

Now, I again ask that Englishman who admires the American constitution, whether he would like to have a President and a Legislature that advocate slavery? men that defend the torture of the innocent, by flogging, by selling the distracted mother to one ruffian, her screaming infant to another, the wretched husband and father to a third? And when the spirits of those

miserable innocent beings are thus cast down to the lowest depths of human suffering, and they become silent under the pressure of astounding despair, the monsters, who have made the purchase, taunt them with being "sulky:" then swiftly descends the strong twisted thong, scoring their quivering flesh; and the bodily torture rivals the mental agonies of the shrieking victims. But this is not all—I could state far more than this, if decency did not bid me draw a veil over scenes of cruelty and obscenity too dreadful to recount. Nor will I describe the roasting alive of M'Intire, an untried, unconvicted, working man, executed by "*Lynch Law*," and to such Law are two millions of the working classes exposed in America! English admirer of American freedom, how wouldst thou like to have a judge on the English bench charge the jury to acquit men who had burned alive an innocent working man? Yes, innocent! for all are so that are untried. And for what were these accused men acquitted, or, at least, not punished? Because they were falsely accused? No! But because a *multitude* committed the horrible crime and could not be *all* arrested. Therefore, the ruffians, whom the executive power *were* able to seize, and who *were* proved in a court of justice to have been guilty of committing murder in the most revolting manner, were turned loose into

society, upon the atrocious principle of American law (as the judge is said to have told the jury, while the real cause of the wretched man's treatment was his colour!) that when a *multitude* were engaged in a crime, it was impossible to punish *all*, because *all* could not be arrested; consequently, it would be unjust to punish the few that *were* arrested! This is Lynch law: this is the *republic* of the United States: this is the freedom of the New World!

That there are dreadful cases of slavery among us, is true—that of manufactory children, for example, which is revolting; but such cases of slavery are against the principles of the English constitution; they are abuses, and not principles of the constitution, as in America; with us they form the dirt that obscures the gold, but do not prove any baseness in the metal. Peace and reform be to the Americans; but Heaven defend us from their constitution!

I have endeavoured to show that every American President is likely to have his own private interest at heart, and that his private interest is not, necessarily, the interest of the great American nation; it may be accidentally so, but this is not probable, because a man of talent and ambition, and who is at the head of a government, strikes out some great system for his own and his nation's glory, and such a system could

not be executed during the short rule of an American President, who, knowing this, will, therefore, pursue his private interests and those of his faction.

It does not, therefore, appear probable that a consistent principle of rule will continue to actuate the government of the American nation, for any great length of time.

But let us contrast with this an hereditary sovereign, and a nobility forming an order in the state; they give a connecting chain which unites the operation and plans of successive parliaments, and this holds them in one steady and consistent course. Neither the crown nor the nobility, if their power is justly limited, and if they have no privileges which exempt them from bearing all the burdens of the state in common with the labouring class, can have any real interest separate from that of the poorest man. If the people thrive, the crown must thrive, for, as the sovereign is elevated above his people, so his people, being raised, necessarily raise him, for his relative elevation above them continues, and all stand united on commanding ground. The sovereign of a great people must always be invested with their grandeur.

But any attempt to degrade the people must also lower the power and dignity of the crown; nor do their ignorance and poverty offer any

excuse for depriving men of their rights; poverty being a misfortune, gives a man, if possible, a stronger claim to that which, of right, belongs to him, and as to "the ignorance of the people" —pooh! *Magna Charta* was gained by men among whom were some, it is said, that could neither read that charter, nor sign their names to it, although they were barons of England! But mother-wit told them what was necessary for their own safety. Why, the great Duke of Marlborough could hardly read or write! When the people are refused their rights (of which they can judge, as well as King John's Barons, without knowing how to read and write), danger is abroad; force, cruel expedients, and exasperating policy, then become the weapons of government, till at last the people, like the "stern gentlemen" (but not scholars) of Runnemede, use the same means: they rebel. The labouring class always suffer privations. If the rich are just towards them, they are content and social; they feel that God has made them poor, and they do not repine, for, as our Saviour says, they are more religious and more moral than the rich. In consequence of possessing their rights, they become more noble in their thoughts and in their deeds. But if the rich educate the multitude, and, while they teach the poor man to estimate his rights, teach him also to see

that he is deprived of them: if, while the rich do this, they expect the poor to suffer in patience, not what God inflicts, and with it sends the power to bear, but what the rich inflict, and send no power to bear; then do the poor feel vilified and injured: they become base and revengeful: fear may long prevent open violence; but it generates hypocrisy and all that demoralization which renders men devilish and dreadful. To bestow upon man his rights, and instruct him how to value and to use them, is to cultivate all the nobleness of human nature. It is a fearful thing so to depress men, so to impoverish them, and, at the same time, so to cut off relief, that they revolt. Woe be to those who push a nation to such straits, for the state of society *then* becomes deplorable. Men who succeed in seizing their rights by force have seldom any regard for the rights of others; they are filled with a spirit of vengeance: in the fulness of success they become detestable tyrants. If they fail in the struggle, they sink into hopeless baseness. Governments should have that moral courage which makes them boldly just: it is not men that *receive* justice, but those who *take* it, that are to be feared; why will not governments see that their force to hold the multitude in due subjection to the laws is quadrupled by giving men their rights? To do this makes

the power of a government gigantic. To refuse, gives to it the feebleness of decrepitude, and to its foes the fierceness of tigers! Truly it is not the act of a wise government to deny the people justice, for the denial of justice leads to revolt: it may come sooner, or it may come later, but the result is as certain as that the night follows the day.

The degradation and impoverishment of the labourer are the ruin of a nation, injuring equally the monarch and the people; for, as I have already said, the sovereign and the labourer must rise and fall together; the one eats the bread which the other makes, and, in eating it, the king gives a pledge that he will protect the producer by the established laws, and secure to him so much of the "staff of life" as is necessary to his health and strength. To give this protection forms the sovereign's part of the bargain with his people, and a most awful one it is, in the eyes of God and man. The kingly office is not a sinecure. The whole strength of mind and body, and the whole life of the elevated being who fills a throne, scarcely suffice to redeem the awful pledge given to the people. This strong reciprocal duty between the throne and the nation; this interchange of laborious but grateful offices; this patriarchal feeling on one side, and filial veneration on the other; should

produce a degree of consistency and durability in the English constitutional hereditary monarchy and aristocracy, that does not belong to the American republic. The Queen of England is, under certain conditions, a proprietor. The President of America has only a four years' lease. The Queen would not willingly injure her property. The President turns his four years' lease to the best advantage, for his own personal interest, and he cares not for the evil consequences which such conduct produces to the land; they will not fall upon his child, for his child is not his heir, and, as to his successor, he may be his mortal foe.

If I am correct in the foregoing views, both the victorious and the defeated armies at New Orleans fought upon a territory to which *neither* had a right; the land belonged to the Indians. So far the belligerents were equal; circumstances which neither could control placed both there, and brought them into collision. Accident gave the victory to the American army. But the British soldier was decidedly the man who served under the more free constitution of the two. He was strictly a national warrior. Had the British soldier defended the coast of Great Britain against invaders, as the American soldiers did New Orleans, his countrymen would have flocked, as one man, to his assistance. The

American soldier, on the contrary, though he behaved well in the lines of New Orleans, was, with great difficulty, brought thither by the brave and able General Jackson, whose energy and abilities overcame a want of vigour in the laws, united, as it has been confidently asserted, to apathy and treason among the citizens; and, had that brave and celebrated officer been defeated, numbers of his countrymen were prepared to join the English army; and two millions of enslaved working people were ready to rise in arms, and aid the invaders against a constitution and a government which held and still holds them in chains. I say again, that the British soldier is more the soldier of the nation, more thoroughly the soldier of freedom, and, *collectively*, more honourable in his service, than the American soldier—I say *collectively*, because the American soldiers are *individually* as brave and honourable as the British; nor can any man entertain a higher respect for them than myself. I do not criticise the Americans, but I criticise the principles of their constitution. Here then I come again to the point. We have the best and most free of *all* constitutions that have ever been seen, whether European or American, unless, indeed, the fossil remains of a better can be found by the geologists, one appertaining to the world which Moses forgot to tell

us of, and the history of which has not yet been discovered; but, referring to our own alive and biblical world, this our English constitution is magnificent. Thus thinking it the best, I hold that soldiers can not be called "Helots," but are armed citizens, who defend what is, and ought to be, so dear to us; nor can I be justly accused of an unnecessary digression, in comparing this constitution with that of the American republic, because every nation is justified in seeking that constitution which gives the greatest happiness to the people; and, if the American constitution could make our nation more happy than the English constitution, it is natural for the people of England to wish for it, and to consider that army which would oppose its introduction as the "Helots" of a despot. I have, therefore, a right to show why I think, in common with my countrymen, that our constitution is far superior to, and more free than, that of America, and that we are bound by reason and loyalty to defend it, and also to defend the British soldiers against the accusation of being "Helots."

The author goes on to say, "I am aware of the thousand defects of the organization which then expired; but I assert that it surpassed our's in this, that it allowed the national and martial fire of France to burn and blaze more freely." Yes, it did, and men were sacrificed

whenever a few fiery nobles chose to make war upon each other. The slaying of poor men was nothing: they were only base-born vassals!

The Count continues: "This sort of army was a very strong and a very complete armour with which the country covered the sovereign power, but all the pieces of which could drop off of themselves, one after another, if that power attempted to employ them against it." Now what a proof we have here of the folly and weakness of such armour! Suppose that the king should enter upon a just war, and, at a critical moment, one of these pieces of armour, being sulky, or bribed, or frightened at reverses, which threatened to draw the enemy upon this piece of armour's own particular territory, or, having some affront of its own, it drops off, and other pieces, for similar reasons, follow its example; then the sovereign and the nation are left naked and defenceless. When the foe has smitten the king, he next proceeds to batter each of these doughty pieces of armour, one after another, and does his will upon them at leisure. How France was rent and mangled by these pieces of armour is well known. Armagniacs, Burgundians, Kabochians, were all pieces of good proof armour, according to Count de Vigny; but it would be difficult for him to say how they were useful to the crown, or to the people of France;

unless he thinks that the massacres they committed, and the battle of Agincourt, were advantageous to that country. Even in Turenne's time, the "*rough gentlemen*," those pieces of self-willed armour, played a strange part in "*covering the sovereign power*." The "national and martial fire of France" burned freely enough, but not very advantageously for the sovereign power, or for the country, when the rough gentlemen led Frenchmen to cut each other's throats under Turenne and Condé in the faubourg Saint Antoine! However, it is needless to pursue this matter any farther.

The Count Alfred may have just cause to blame the present constitution of continental armies, but, thanks to our Saxon ancestors and ourselves, his observations do not apply to the present national army of England. The British soldier enters the service of the crown with his own free and unbiassed will; and not only that, but every precaution is taken to make him *reflect* before he enlists. Within a certain time he may retract; he enlists deliberately; and the free constitutions of his country then order him implicitly to obey the crown. So that he has *himself*, by his representative in Parliament, laid this injunction *on himself*, and virtually serves *himself* in serving his sovereign. If a riot happens, and his aid is demanded, he is only obey-

ing the social laws as a special constable in a red coat. Some foolish laws there are, which counteract each other, and, at times, render the situation of the military man somewhat critical. But, if such laws entrap the soldier, the constitutional power of his sovereign and of the representatives of the nation, united to the general feeling of justice, will always be strong to secure indemnity for, and protect, the soldier whose conduct in such situations has been good. The continental armies are, on the contrary, distinct from the people; the soldier is forced into *their* ranks: therefore, the Count's endeavours to "avert from the head of the soldier that malediction which the citizen is frequently ready to hurl at him, and to invoke for the army the forgiveness of the nation," are highly praiseworthy, and the author has done his work with much talent. But this relates not to the British soldier; he stands fearless and proud amidst his nation; obedient to, and honoured by, his sovereign and by his fellow subjects, he craves no forgiveness; he is not a Helot; he is free, virtuous, patriotic. He must, indeed, feel a proud confidence in his own high position as a military man; he must feel proud that, every time he pulls the trigger, he fires in the cause and with the approbation of his country; he must feel that every blow he strikes with his matchless

bayonet is struck for the constitution of England and for her constitutional sovereign. He slays no fellow-creature for the caprices of a tyrant; he is not the hired assassin of a despot. He is the patriotic soldier of the nation. The British army is neither "blind" nor "mute." It sees the road of duty, broad and plain: and its charging war-cry is re-echoed by the shout of an applauding country.

But the continental soldier has a wavering conscience: he strikes for the king, but his king and his country are not *one;* and the victory he gains for the first is but another rivet on the fetters with which the last is bound. Victory for his despotic master is defeat to himself; he is, indeed, a Helot, and his blow wavers! Need I say more to account for that intrepidity shown by British soldiers in battle, and which drew forth the admiration of the brave and eloquent General Foy, who calls the British that "astonishing infantry?"

When the emperor Napoleon ruled France, his soldiers fought for a *constitutional monarch:* whether despotic, or not despotic, signifies nothing; he was, past dispute, the chosen sovereign of France. That was enough. And what was the result? His troops fought with the desperation of men whose hearts were in the cause. Then came a king who was *not* the chosen of

France: a king who tyrannically broke her constitution—a constitution which his kingly word was pledged to preserve unbroken, and upon the faith of which promise, and by foreign armies to back him, he had been placed upon the throne of that great country. The insult roused the nation. He foolishly attempted to maintain his perjury and injustice by force of arms. Then the men who fought for Napoleon at Waterloo, with desperate valour and with united hearts, wavered in the streets of Paris when fighting for Charles X., and were beaten by the half-armed citizens. A national army is the most terrible in battle, and, to be thoroughly national, it must not only be composed of natives, but be headed by a constitutional monarch. Such is the British army, and such is the secret of its great prowess in combat. If ever a monarch could justly exclaim: "I am the state!" it is the sovereign of England. If there be a firm throne in Europe, it is that of the Queen of England. The English throne is like the head of the human body; whatever injures it injures the whole frame and endangers life; every care is taken for its protection, every anxiety felt for its safety. Other thrones are not like the head, but like wens; they are excrescences, and the body wishes to be rid of them: habit makes them bearable, but reason condemns them. As

to America, she is covered with a congregation of heads—an ill-looking, despotic kind of Hydra, who insists upon being called free, but snarls and lacerates with its fangs every one that presumes to have an opinion of his own. The anomalous monster whirls round its many heads the chains for binding two millions of working men, who groan in hopeless slavery. England alone is free, and, but for the national debt, would be happy. Purify, but change not. Let us be assured that our own Herculean constitution is more powerful and more noble than the slave-guarding hydra of America. In England, opinion is free, and each man may frankly speak his own. Not so in America. There, Lynch Law attends the free expression of an unpopular opinion. There the hydra-headed serpent twists round the negro Laocoon, and spirts its venom at all who beg for mercy to the Black. But let war come, and we shall see what the dingy race can do against the slave-drivers in the southern States. America fears war; does England fear war? Let it come, and we shall see which constitution is the best. But the American army is, nevertheless, a constitutional army. It excludes the slaves, and is composed purely of freemen; it is therefore brave, and will call forth all the ability and courage of an enemy.

I have indulged in these reveries, because they

tend to prove the weakness of despotism, whether seated in one king, as in Prussia, or in many kings, as in America, when compared with the strength and vigour of a free constitution like that of England. In Prussia, the army fights for the king, not for the country; 96,000 Prussians fled at the battle of Ligny! It is a weak army. The American army in war must guard 2,000,000 of its domestic slaves, while it meets the enemy in the field. It is brave—but it serves a constitution that is not free; therefore, it also is a weak army. The English army fights for the crown and the whole free nation. It has no thought but how to conquer; its very spine is patriotism—its very essence is freedom. It is a strong army. That various results may arise from the errors or the abilities of the respective leaders of these armies, is nothing to the purpose; *that* is accidental and common to all; but the generals of a republic are more likely to be defeated than those which serve a monarch. Hannibal was ruined, and Carthage ruined with him, by self-styled republicans. Marlborough was baffled by republican Dutch deputies; and France was lost, after Waterloo, by republicans, who generally sacrifice their country to their jealousy of a great man: an imaginary form of government is more dear to them than their country.

Washington succeeded, not by help of republicans, but in despite of republicans. His strength was not in the new form of government, but in the folly and injustice of England, whose government broke the principle of her constitution, and endeavoured to oppress a colony too powerful to submit to injustice. It is not strange that *individuals* should forget the proverb, that "honesty is the best policy," because our passions blind us to the truth; besides, the punishment of dishonesty is often delayed till after death, and the other world is, we erroneously think, afar off: but that a representative government should deliberately neglect this apophthegm is not easily comprehensible. It must know that injustice is weak, and all governments wish to be strong; yet it does such bad things, well knowing that the punishment will not be long in coming. America, Ireland, and India, are troublesome to England. Poland is the feeble part of Russia. Slavery is the curse of America. South America ruined Spain; Spain avenged herself on Napoleon: our war of aggression on France has produced the national debt. Unjust principles have always a re-action, yet governments will not abandon them.

REMARKS ON CHAPTER III.

The sad picture of a soldier's life, which Count Alfred has painted with great strength of colouring in his third chapter, is an imaginary portrait; I see nothing of that lugubrious cast in the reality which makes the warrior a melancholy, listless being, dreary and discontented. For my part,

> "I love that drum's harmonious sound,
> Parading round, and round, and round."

So British soldiers sing, so they feel — merry. They are generally, I think, a happy and a joyous band. That "the self-denial of the warrior is a heavier cross than that of the martyr," as the author asserts, may be true, and that "a man must have borne it long before he knows its magnitude and its weight" is also probable, if it be a cross. For my part, it is one of which I never felt the weight, and, after forty-four years of such martyrdom, I like it as well as ever. I see so many trying to enlist, that I really cannot think the soldier leads a gloomy life. When I was in France, the French soldiers seemed to be happy fellows too. However, Count de Vigny knows best. I only vouch for the English soldier, who has more of the merry than the mournful in his constitution.

But let us follow the Count farther. He says that the soldier is "blind, mute, sad, sedate, listless, discontented, sallow, a martyr; that the character of the man is effaced by the soldier;" and out of this he issues, according to the author, "a factitious, but generous character," the traits of which are "grand and good, like those of the antique medals," and then "the entire renunciation of thinking and acting" produces "virtues that are more rare in the free and active classes." It is not so easy to understand how the "entire renunciation of thought" should produce any virtue. What the Count means by the "necessary farce of authority" is quite beyond my comprehension. If a thing is necessary, I can see nothing farcical in it. Then Count de Vigny, having made out the "military character" to be so serious, so grave, so austere, and so gloomy, adds that there is "something boyish to be found in it, because life in regiments has some resemblance to life in colleges." Why, surely, the life led in colleges is not gloomy—not what he paints the life of a soldier—yet college life is exactly like the life of a soldier in point of that good fellowship which reigns through both, according to my version of a military life. The author then gives a good account of the gravity and self-importance which the superior officers of the French army assume,

and says that they all copy Napoleon. I conclude that his description is just, and it is extremely well done; his pictures are vivid and full of spirit. This assumed gravity and silent demeanour, entrenched chin-deep in cold formalities, is not peculiar to the French army; I have often observed it in some of our own officers, and confess I always laughed at it as a mask which they put on to hide their ignorance. Why should men in command assume a taciturnity and a reserve that are not natural to them? Why should their thoughts be, to use the author's words, "locked up in as close a silence as a Trappist's?" It may be wise, but it is for the individual *only* that it is wise: it is not good for the service: a man so conscious of his inferiority to those under his orders is not likely to command with good effect; he thinks that those under him are abler than himself, and, if *he* feels incapable of command, what must *they* think of him? Even if such a man should possess ability, how is he to study the characters and ascertain the knowledge possessed by those under his orders, if he enters into no converse with them? The knowledge of men's characters is a difficult science, and no man is so clever that he can afford to give up one of his senses when he applies himself to the study. It is true that he may listen without speaking. I

grant that; but if he be so silent he will have nothing to listen to. A man in command must draw forth those under him; for, if he be solemn and silent, they will be as solemn and silent as himself. I have ever observed that this affectation of dignity is very apt to be accompanied by great secret curiosity, which, not being able to satisfy itself by conversation, does so by spies, and some artful knave supplies the food in abundance. Into this knave's hands, Don Pomposo quickly falls. At the same time, observe that what I say only applies to the affectation of silence and reserve. A man who is naturally so never casts a wet blanket upon society. On the contrary, his native modesty elicits the freedom of conversation. Such a man affects nothing; his nobleness inspires respect and confidence, and those under his command seek to display before him the "small ware" that forms their stock. He throws them off their guard: he reads their every word: he knows them by heart: his mind, not being pre-occupied, like that of Don Pomposo, with acting the part of dignity and grandeur, is calm and full of observation and clear judgment. He courts familiarity, but his officers fear to take too much; they are checks upon themselves, because they feel that he would silently disapprove of their conduct, were they to pass the bounds of proper

respect, and to lose his good opinion is what they most fear. Such a man is born for command.

We do not find that great men affected dignity. Cromwell, we are told, was so far from being affected, that he was not only familiar with those under his command, but was so to a degree almost amounting to boyishness. Marlborough was also without affectation. Wolfe (as I was told by a friend of his, who was also a captain in his regiment) used to amuse himself with his officers as if he were an ensign. Sir Ralph Abercrombie too — there was no affectation in that great soldier. Neither was there in Lord Cornwallis, a man remarkable for the noble simplicity of his character. Sir John Moore was equally destitute of affected dignity. He entered into the society of those under his command as their equal, confident that his vast superiority as a man would, at all times, raise him more above them than even his high rank could do: he required no external aid. There was, among his officers, an awe of him; but it was not inspired by any reserve or haughtiness of manner on his part; though I have seen him put down pert and self-sufficient men by a degree of sarcasm which few could withstand; those who could, were not likely to provoke it. His manners were extremely polished and agree-

able, cheerful, and, at times, even playful. I recollect once standing in the street at Lisbon, looking at a very pretty woman who was at a window, when some one gently laid hold of both my ears, saying in a joking tone: "Ah! caitiff! have I caught you? what right have you to look at such an ugly old woman as that? I will put you under arrest." Turning round, I saw that it was the commander in chief! "I will thank you for the punishment, sir," said I, "if you will place the ugly old woman over me as sentry." Another time, when going from his quarters in the village of Sandgate to the evening parade, on the heights of Shorncliff, the ascent being steep, Moore said to six or eight officers who were with him: "Now for a race to the top of the hill!" and away we all started. Neil Campbell (afterwards with Napoleon at Elba) beat us all, and Moore was second. These are trifling matters, but they mark the unaffected and social feelings of a great man, and, as such, the reader will, perhaps, pardon them. Regard, admiration, and, in very many instances, gratitude for the deep interest he took in their welfare, were the feelings which were entertained for Moore by those who served under his command. There were some characters whom no man liked, and they disliked Moore; but such men had another feeling,

which kept them in their proper places — fear. Moore's nature was unaffected, kind, gentle, benevolent: nor was he roused to severity, until provoked by great want of zeal for the public service or by great criminality.

It would not be proper to speak much of those who are alive, but I may so far venture as to say that no man will accuse the Duke of Wellington, Lords Lynedoch, Hill, W. Bentinck, and many others among our military leaders, of affectation. That there are some charlatans in the army must be admitted, for, as General Lloyd says, "*all professions have their quacks;*" what I maintain is, that no great mind has an affectation of dignity. Great men attend to that which they are about, to the matter in hand, and not to their looks. Whether grave or cheerful in their manner, they follow the natural bent of their character. It is true that most great men have a certain air about them which is called "dignity." Their abilities have made them pass their lives in the transaction of great affairs, and these demand deep thought, producing a gravity of manner; the body conforming to the mind. But when mere rank, a blue ribbon hanging from the pedestal of an empty skull, affects a dignified demeanour, then men laugh at the fool. Such dignity is not real; it is made by their tailor.

But Count Alfred de Vigny says, that all soldiers are affected and pompous in France. I did not perceive this among those whom I had the honour to be acquainted with, and I knew several among the most renowned officers of France, such as Marshals Soult and Ney, Generals Laborde, Ricard, Loison, Armagnac, and others. I saw no affectation among them; however, M. de Vigny is the better authority, and affirms that this affected dignity was assumed in imitation of their master. Now, what does Napoleon say on this subject? I speak from memory, for I have not his memoirs by me: he says that, being only twenty-five years of age when first promoted to the rank of a general, and to the command of a large army, beaten, disorganized, filled with many older officers than himself, men of high rank, many of whom had also seen much service, while he had seen scarcely any, they, for that reason, naturally gave themselves the airs of superiority, placing themselves above their boy-commander. This being the case, he was obliged to assume a severe reserve, in order to prevent his being treated as a child by these veterans. His commanding genius, and a few battles, soon taught them to bow before their and Europe's master. Had he not acted thus at first, he could not have preserved the integrity of his command, and, moreover,

the vast actions which he then achieved demanded so much thought, that there could be but little affectation in this reserve, to say nothing of the misfortune to which every general is doomed who has a civil government over him. This, of all misfortunes and impediments to war, is the greatest, and enough to make any general grave. It is the misfortune of misfortunes. Look at the history of all wars, where the sovereign did not command in person: look at Napier's history of that in the Peninsula, how the Duke of Wellington was embarrassed by British, Spanish, and Portuguese governments on both sides of the Atlantic! Civil governments *make* wars and *mar* wars. Either I am right in this assertion, or all history is wrong: the reader must decide for himself. If a general succeeds in war, he is too much pleased to make complaints; if he be defeated, no one will listen to them, and so the faults of governments escape notice. It is fair, however, to add that the general gets all the credit in the hour of triumph: if he gets more than he merits, which is seldom the case, the overplus is taken from his troops, not from the civil government, which, more or less, always does mischief. Now, Napoleon's "*government at home*," called THE DIRECTORY, had but one thought, from the time he gained his first victory. That thought was how to

guillotine General Bonaparte. Happily for himself and for France, he was too strong for the Directory; but when a man has a "*government at home*," with all its spies at his back, and an enemy's army, three times the strength of his own, in his front, he may well look grave; he is something like the poor Irishwoman, described by the entertaining and reverend author of "*Martin Doyle*." The poor woman came in utter despair to the great lady. "*Oh! my Lady! I'm lost! I'm ruinated! I've two bums upon me, my lady! I've two bums! och hone! what will I do?*" The English reader must be told that a *bum-bailiff* is *always* cut in two, and *sometimes shot* in Ireland; the one being considered as a matter of convenience in speaking, and the other as a matter of necessity in living: and, indeed, though I am far from defending the impropriety of bisecting the Queen's English, still, I think, if a word *be* cut in two, people have a right to make use of which half they please. Now, Napoleon had "*two bums*" upon him. The one took the shape of the Austrian army, the other that of the French Directory; and he treated them both in the Irish fashion; he shot one, and cut the other in two: and, in performing such serious feats, his gravity was very natural, till, this last operation having been successfully performed at St. Cloud, on the

18th Brumaire, he became lively and natural, as may be assumed from the account of the Duchess of Abrantes, who says that he used to pull off his coat, and play at "*prison-bars*" at Malmaison, after he became First Consul. Every authentic account that we have describes him to be unaffected and benevolent.

REMARKS ON CHAPTER IV.

The "*Red Seal,*" in the author's fourth chapter, is a sad story! In the *first* place, Englishmen do not allow the government to send people on board a ship, with a letter to the captain, desiring him to blow their brains out when he arrives at a certain latitude.

In the *second* place, Englishmen enter the army *voluntarily*. Now, an honest man should obey any government that he serves under, but he should not serve a government which is in the hands of men like Marat and his cut-throat associates. He should not be a soldier under any but a constitutional government, like our own. A man must obey Him who is greater than kings and rulers; occasions may befall, when he must set man at defiance and obey God. Military discipline is good, and obedience

is necessary; but even our code, rigid as it is, confines our obedience to that which is *lawful*. There is a limit to the world, and to all things that it contains, and, among the rest, to obedience. If, for example, my superior officer were to order me to shoot one of my daughters, I would make a slight alteration in the command, and shoot him instead! When a man agrees to obey, it is understood that he is to obey as far as a man can obey.

> "Magnificent Don Ferdinando
> Cannot do more than a man can do!"

There are moral, as well as physical, impossibilities, and they often depend upon education, temperament, and circumstances. A story is told of three sovereigns at the congress assembled at Vienna. They were arguing about obedience, each claiming for his army the superiority in that point. Sending for three of their soldiers, the King of Prussia ordered his man to leap out of the window. The Prussian soldier opened the window, looked out, and then, with a rhodomontade, about the pleasure it would give him to die in battle for his majesty, refused to break his neck out of a window. Then came the Austrian. He curled his whiskers, looked fiercely at the window as if he would eat it, if a window could be eaten,

then rolled his eyes upon the Emperor, refused, and fell at his master's feet, craving mercy. Now came the Russian soldier's turn: "Jump out of that window," said Alexander. The man instantly crossed himself, ejaculated a short prayer, and proceeded to cast himself out. This story may be true or false, but it answers my purpose, which is to shew that obedience may be pushed to such an extreme as to become nonsense. There are cases in which a man's reason must guide him, but he must take the risk of that punishment which attends disobedience, for that is a matter of course. Had I been the commander of the "Marat," I should have considered the Republican Government as composed of men who had, by fraud and violence, possessed themselves of the supreme power against the consent of my country, and deemed it my duty to save as many of their victims as I could. The tyranny of the privileged classes gave the French people the right to overthrow those privileges; the tyranny of such men as Robespierre, Danton, Marat, gave every Frenchman a right to overthrow *them* likewise. The French had rebelled to obtain justice; and if injustice was to be the result, they should have rebelled again; they should have always rebelled against the men who slew Louis XVI. They should have reasoned thus: "We have

got a free constitution and a good man for our king, possessing an hereditary title, sanctioned by time; therefore we are now the enemies of every man who is not loyal; for a nation cannot have a better constitution." With these feelings and a clear conscience, I, for one, should have joined the people of La Vendée, till Napoleon became the chosen monarch of France. Had the commander of the "Marat" acted thus, his conscience would not have had so much to answer for. It is not every upstart government that has a claim upon a soldier's obedience, because that soldier happens to be in the army at the moment when such a government usurps the rule. If he chooses to enter its service, because he approves of it, well and good, but, unless it be there placed by the avowed will of the whole nation, (as King William III. is said to have been,) it has no claims upon his service. The Prince of Orange was, as we are told, the choice of the nation; but, had the latter been governed by the true principles of the constitution, I much doubt whether it would have joined the standard of the Dutch chief; it would have remained firm to King James, and demanded the impeachment of those who were constitutionally responsible. That "The King can do no wrong," appears to be the pivot upon which our constitution

turns; all else may change, but that must be fixed.

Nothing can be more dangerous, both to the sovereign and the people, than to break this sacred principle, and allow the responsibility of ministers to become a dead letter. To admit that the crown can do wrong is to invest the majesty of the throne with human frailties, and expose it to be arraigned by every member of Parliament who chooses to insult the sovereign. Nor does it seem very difficult to trace the numerous dangers to which this doctrine would lead. Let us take one. Suppose an able man to have artfully concocted an unpopular law, the *New Poor Law*, for example, and, when the people rage, suppose the same man tells them that the Queen *can* do wrong, *does* do wrong, and is a responsible agent, and, therefore, the just object of their "*hatred and scorn*." It is evident that this man first enrages the people, and then brings their rage into contact with the throne.

Indecent and dangerous as such language is, it has, nevertheless, appeared in an anonymous pamphlet, entitled "A Letter to the Queen on the State of the Monarchy." It is idle for the writer to make a pretence of acknowledging that, by the principle of the constitution, the King can do no wrong, when the whole language of his letter is calculated to treat this

doctrine as an absurdity. He condemns the present ministers as guilty, yet he would shield them, and the majorities which keep them in power, from responsibility, while he tries to hound on the people against their young and innocent Queen; exposing her to wild and unjustifiable insult. Verily the author of this letter was right in not putting his name to such a production; for, while it exhibits his abilities, it makes his want of principle conspicuous. Why, the very exordium of his letter shows that nothing but the most cruel, the most diabolical injustice could hold the Queen responsible for any conduct, which her constitutional advisers pursue, and which the Parliament approves and supports! The people of England are more just and more generous than this writer imagines. They will not forget that "the Queen can do no wrong," and that ministers are, by the constitution, responsible.

If matters come to the sad extremities that this writer apprehends, the people of England will know whom to blame. They will be guided by the constitution and by their own sense of justice. The author of this letter proceeds to say, "that there is no punishment for the public guilt of a minister," beyond "the hatred and scorn of the country." What! are not Parliaments, impeachments, and Tower Hill, all forth-

coming? Nor will his broad hint to the people of England be taken, that they should pass over these things as obsolete, and at once throw responsibility upon the Queen; for, to this length does the letter go. Her people *do not* hold her responsible; they *do* hold her ministers responsible; they know the constitution, and every honest Englishman must feel disgust at the oligarch, or republican, who seeks to hold up to their hate that sacred and innocent sovereign, who is deservedly the object of their affection, and whose safety and *irresponsibility* ought to be, and are, the objects of their greatest care. The very ignorance of public affairs, in which, as the writer says, she is kept by the present ministers, is alone enough to rally the nation round her! Are Englishmen grown so base, as this writer would persuade us, that they will hold a Queen, young, inexperienced, and, as he says, deceived by the rulers of the state—that they will hold her responsible for evils produced by those very men, or, by men who ruled this realm before she was born? No, the English people are too just, and know their constitution too well for this.

At this moment, dangerous and even awful as it is, the standard which gives hope and confidence is the throne; and if the Queen be responsible, in any way, as this writer avers, then

adieu to hope, to confidence, and to safety, for all must depend upon a civil war, the result of which no man can foretell. But this writer says that the people are for monarchy. He is right: they know that the crown is hereditary, limited, but *not responsible*, and responsible the people of England will not allow it to be made; unless they wish to see their land deluged with blood: for, however strong a republican party may be, let the writer of this letter be assured that those who will stand by the constitutional Queen of England are a stern unflinching set; men who will not see her mixed up with the crimes, or the follies, of her responsible advisers, if criminal they be, as he avers: men who would willingly see those advisers delivered over, if such a step be necessary, to punishment: but who would stand in arms between HER and danger. This is loyalty; for loyalty does not consist in being the partizan of a Whig or Tory faction; it consists in defending the Queen and the constitution to the best of a man's abilities against all who seek to overthrow them; nor can any honest radical reformer, who wishes the nation to gain its constitutional rights, lend his voice to republican principles, and pretend that to give the people their rights requires that those of the crown, or of any subject, should be taken away.

If a man be a republican in principle, let him avow it: many a great and good man has been, and many a good man is, a republican; every American, every Swiss, every man in the Ionian Islands, is so; it is a matter of opinion, and all men have a right to their opinions. But a man who, in England, proclaims himself a "radical reformer," and is really a republican, proclaims himself either a fool or a knave; one who, being afraid openly to say he is a republican, hoists the false colours of reform to cover his disloyalty, and forward traitorous designs upon the constitution, which he pretends that he wishes to preserve.

The great prerogative of the English crown, a prerogative arising out of its limitation, and right of inheritance, is its irresponsibility. Without *that*, our's would be the most degraded and unstable throne in Europe; instead of being, as it is, the greatest, the noblest, the firmest. It would be continually suffering martyrdom for its ministers. The Queen would be placed in the unjust position of being responsible, without power. But this is far from being the case. "*The Queen can do no wrong*"—this is her *right*, the prerogative which she has received from the nation; and every radical reformer is bound to protect her right with his pen, and his sword if need be. It is not exclusively justice for the Commons, justice

for the Lords, justice for the Crown, that a loyal Englishman demands; it is "justice for all;" and he who flinches from this is a traitor to the Queen and to the country. Now this brings me to the point.

Louis XVI. had signed a free constitution at the demand of the French nation. He had been murdered while under the protection of the nation, as a constitutional monarch, (I should say "King," for the word monarch, though used in common parlance, is erroneously applied to a constitutional king, as it implies absolute power,) and thus I argue that I have proved my assertion to be correct, viz.: The republican government of France (having destroyed the constitution, and the constitutional King of France,) had no claim to the obedience of the commander of the "Marat." He was not warranted in shooting his prisoner, who was the victim of the "Reign of Terror." The captain did not obey from a sense of duty to his country, nor from patriotic feeling: had he acted upon principle, he would have cast his "Red Seals" into the sea, and with them his obedience to "The Reign of Terror." The author gives us the story as true, therefore, we must be so uncharitable as to conclude that the old master of the privateer or pirate (they are not very different!) was not a patriot, but a murderer; in short, that poor Laura was too pretty!

I may be told that I do not get out of the difficulty by this, and that a constitutional sovereign may order some horrible deed to be done, and that the soldier must obey. I admit this, but it is not probable, and upon a constitutional king there are *checks* which appear to me sufficient guards. First, A constitutional sovereign has but little power to indulge in acts of personal vengeance, and has every interest in gaining the affections of a free people for himself and his family. He speaks with the voice of the nation. Secondly, The sovereign must have the concurrence of responsible ministers. Thirdly, They all know that he who obeys may, while obeying, remonstrate boldly, and the nation will raise its voice against any atrocity. The press will not be silent. Fourthly, Both the king and his ministers must adhere to *law*. Now I deem these and other checks to be strong, and always to be in operation. But such governments as that of France was, between the death of Louis XVI. and the reign of Napoleon, had no responsibility. Paris ruled France; a mob ruled Paris; and some cut-throat ruled the mob! There was no check; all were without responsibility. Who dared remonstrate? In a constitutional monarchy a man may freely express his opinions; he may avow himself to be of any party in politics; for the sovereign is of no party.

But he could not so express his honest feelings under the republican government of France; nor could he call the slave-trade "an infamous traffic" were he in America, without suffering the guillotine in the first country, or Lynch law in the latter: such are republics, compared with constitutional monarchies.

Having finished my observations on the *first part* of this volume, I shall leave the *second part* without particular notice; as to continue my remarks would make too large a volume. Suffice it to say, that the stories are amusing, but written apparently by a Bourbonist, who wishes to place the character of the Emperor Napoleon in a contemptible light, yet to do so without offending the veterans of his Imperial Army. If *their* feelings be like *mine*, the author has failed! With regard to the scene between the Emperor Napoleon and the Pope, two things are to be admired: First, That Pope Pius VII. should venture to call the Emperor Napoleon a "*Comedian*" and a "*Tragedian*" in contempt! Secondly, That Napoleon should agree to such drivelling, and also avow himself to be devoured by "*ennui*." Napoleon suffering from ennui! This scene can only be equalled by the assertion of M. de Segur, that Napoleon was crazy at the battle of Borodino,

and strutted up and down before his guards like an idiot: but, if this was true, who commanded the army for him in that great battle? I suppose it must have been M. de Segur, but that his modesty prevented his mentioning the circumstance! What M. de Segur's dislike to the Emperor arose from, I do not know, but it burns very fiercely through his History of the Russian Campaign. Captain Renaud, (the hero of Count Alfred de Vigny's last story) is more explicit, and leaves nothing to conjecture. He shows that his dislike of the Emperor was natural: the Emperor (whom he calls a "poor ignoramus and a weak creature"—in which opinion, no doubt, the world must coincide) it seems, used to ask the Captain, when a boy, the simplest questions in geography, which he never could answer correctly. And then the "weak creature," the "ignoramus," laughed at him, and turned him into ridicule: and when the "weak creature" left the room, his page wept; thought he would kill himself; and rolled himself on the carpet, which was certainly a much more sensible act. This treatment, I confess, is likely to produce a hostile feeling in a sensitive youth, and excuses the after-prejudices of Captain Renaud against Napoleon; for my part, I should dislike any man who constantly made me weep, kept me dangling on the verge of suicide, and finally

brought me to the anti-climax of rolling myself on a dirty carpet! However, the prejudices of these two persons do not equally darken the eyes of the rest of the world, and history will not admit the madness of Napoleon at Borodino, nor that he was a "weak creature," nor that he ever felt "*ennui*"—no, not even at St. Helena, unless, perhaps, when in company with Sir Hudson Lowe.

The remarks upon Lord Collingwood are much better. There is no attack made upon the character of that great and glorious seaman; therefore the story needs no comment. Everybody admires the man who died on his quarter-deck, rather than abandon his post without the permission of his sovereign!

END OF VOL. I.

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